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ABSTRACT

This document comprises part 2 of a two-part evaluation of the third-year implementation of the New York City Board of Education's 3-year high school Dropout Prevention Initiative (DPI). It consists of reports on 8 special substudies of the program in year 3 (part 1 describes the DPI and presents the evaluation findings and recommendations.) The following studies are reported: (1) "Early Identification of Dropouts" (K. E. Jewell) compares the early attendance patterns and grade performance of dropouts with those of their peers; (2) "A Qualitative Assessment of Student Experiences over Time, Especially During the Transition from Middle School to High School" (M. G. Reich, D. L. Stewart, and M. Westheimer) analyzes student outcomes over time; (3) "The Structuring of Conflict Events in an Urban High School" (M. Westheimer) examines how students interact with teachers and negotiate the existing social order; (4) "High School Reporting of Services to Students in 1987/88: The High School Log" (K. E. Jewell) uses service providers' records to compare the effectiveness of service-delivery models; (5) "The Relationship of Ego Identity and Racial Identity among Black Students" (D. Stewart) examines the connections between racial identity, ego identity, and academic achievement; (6) "Blocked Academic Programs in DPP" (J. Gerics) examines the different modes of operation of four academic programs in which student schedules were grouped together; (7) "The Dropout Prevention Initiative Jobs Program: Perceptions of At-Risk Students" (D. C. Willis and C. M. Springer) examines the impact of a work experience program; and (8) "Case Studies of the DPP Teams in Two High Schools" (S. Sullivan) compares implementation of the Dropout Prevention Program in the Hamilton and Howard schools located in two sharply contrasting neighborhoods. Statistical data on tables and graphs and lists of references are included with each report. (FMW)

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EVALUATION OF THE NEW YORK CITY DROPOUT PREVENTION INITIATIVE

FINAL REPORT ON THE HIGH SCHOOLS FOR YEAR THREE, 1987-88

PART TWO: SPECIAL STUDIES OF THE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM IN YEAR THREE

by

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CHAPTER EIGHT

EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF DROPOUTS

Kenneth E. Jewell

Introduction

This substudy proposed that analyses be undertaken of the early records of current high school students to compare the attendance patterns and grade performances of those who were discharged as dropouts with those of their peers (who were either still in school or who had been discharged on some other basis). The study was founded in current literature which showed that junior high school absentees followed patterns of attendance which were already evident in their elementary schools years, and that those patterns included regular lateness, absences on the same day of the week, and frequent late return after week-ends or school closures. It has been shown, too, that academic grades are strong predictors of who drops out of school. These findings suggested that attendance patterns and grades of students in elementary schools might be indicators of later dropping out.

The source of information for this study was to be the elementary school roll book, in which records of daily attendance are kept. Unlike students' cumulative records, which are transferred with them as they move from school to school, the roll books are retained in the school of origin. To view the elementary school records, therefore, the researcher would have to visit each elementary school attended by the students in the study - and it soon became apparent that this would be a major stumbling block. Of the 729 high school students selected for the study, 266 did not attend any New York City elementary school. The remaining 463 students attended, between them, 115 such schools, and over half of them attended more than one. Apart from the problems associated with obtaining permission to see the records in each of those schools, the number of schools would render suspect any comparison of records across them. For these two reasons it was decided that the study should not be pursued.

The cumulative records used to identify the 729 students for the study, however, yielded data on age, number of elementary schools attended and age on entering junior high school. Findings from that information are reported here, with comparisons drawn between a dropout group and a control group.

Sample

Two groups of students, a dropout group and a control group, were selected from the roster of one of the program's high schools. The dropout group, numbering 329 students, comprised all students who were discharged as dropouts during the 1986-87 school year. The control group, numbering 400 students, was drawn at random from the students remaining on the roster, and was representative, therefore, of all students who had not, at that point, dropped out. The difference between the two groups lay in the fact that the students in the former group had *already* been discharged as dropouts, while the latter group clearly included some who might be discharged as dropouts at a later date.

Dates of Birth of Target and Control Group Students

Table 8-1 shows the year of birth of students in the dropout and control groups. Ninety-eight percent of students in the dropout group were born between 1966 and 1970; 98.8% of the control group students were born between 1967 and 1972. In the year under study, 1986-87, the mean age of the former group was 18.8 years and of the latter it was 17.2 years, indicating that the dropout group students were significantly older than their control group peers. This is consistent with the finding below that, in the year of study, the ratio of overage-for-grade dropout students to overage-for-grade control students is almost two-to-one.

Elementary Schools Attended

The elementary schools attended by the study students were identified from their cumulative records. The records showed that 111 (33.7%) of the dropout group and 155 (38.75%) of the control group did not attend New York City elementary schools but entered the system directly into junior high schools or high schools. This effectively reduced the sizes of the dropout and control groups to 218 and 245 respectively, and it is upon those smaller groups of students that we now report.

The remaining 463 students attended, between them, 115 different schools in three of the five boroughs. While just under half of them (46.8% dropout and 46.5% control) attended one school only, 30.3% dropout group students and 27% control group students attended three or more elementary schools. There was no significant difference in the numbers of schools attended by students in each group, suggesting that, in terms of changing elementary schools and all that that implies - moving house or dissatisfaction with a particular institution, for example - potential dropouts are as stable as their peers. Table 8-2 shows the numbers of schools attended by students in each group.

Age at Entry into Junior High School

It usually takes a student six years to pass through the six grades of elementary school and the Board of Education's standard age requirement for entry to junior high or intermediate school at grade seven is that the student should be 12 years old by December 31st in the year of entry. The dropout and control groups were very similar on this measure, as Table 8-3, below, indicates. It might have been surmised that a characteristic of potential dropouts would be that they were held back more than their peers, but this seems to have been untrue prior to seventh grade. What is significant is that 43.1% of the dropout group and 40% of the control group were overage for grade even on leaving elementary school.

Age by Grade Analysis in High School

Table 8-4 shows age by grade analyses for dropout and control group students at the start of the 1986-87 school year. Special Education students are not included because age-by-grade is not, for them, an appropriate measure. Unlike the figures for age at entry to junior high schools, in which there was little difference between the groups, these figures are widely disparate. Noting the fact that both groups had roughly equivalent proportions of students who were overage for grade at entry to junior high school (Table Y), it is clear that the dropout group fared very poorly from that point on, to the extent that 97.7% of them were overage for grade and that 87.7% were two or more years overage for grade, compared with 60.5% and 26.9% respectively for the control group. We have no reason to assume that this reflects a school policy of discharging as dropouts only those who are overage for grade; rather, the disparity between the groups suggests that students' experiences in junior high school as well as high school contribute significantly to their dropping out. This in turn suggests that intervention must start well before high school.

Table 8-1

Dates of Birth of Dropout and Control Group Students

Year	Dropout Students #	%	Cum %	Control Students #	%	Cum %
1963				2	.5	.5
1964	2	.6	.6	6	1.5	2.0
1965	4	1.2	1.8	6	1.5	3.5
1966	18	5.5	7.3	11	2.7	6.2
1967	58	17.6	24.9	22	5.5	11.7
1968	106	32.2	57.1	42	10.5	22.2
1969	124	37.7	94.8	89	22.3	44.5
1970	17	5.2	100.0	108	27.0	71.5
1971				81	20.3	91.8
1972				33	8.2	100.0
TOTAL	329	100.0	100.0	400	100.0	100.0

Table 8-2

Elementary Schools Attended by Dropout and Control Group Students

Number of Schools	Dropout Students #	%	Cum %	Control Students #	%	Cum %
1	102	46.8	46.8	114	46.5	46.5
2	51	23.4	70.2	66	26.9	78.4
3	25	11.5	81.7	34	13.9	87.3
4	16	7.3	89.0	21	8.6	95.9
5	16	7.3	96.3	5	2.0	97.9
6	2	.9	97.2	3	1.2	99.1
7	4	1.8	99.0	2	.8	99.9
8	1	.5	99.5			
9	1	.5	100.0			
TOTAL	218	100.0	100.0	245	99.9	99.9

Table 8-3

Age on Entering Junior High School
Dropout and Control Group Students

Age	Dropout Students #	Dropout Students %	Dropout Students Cum %	Control Students #	Control Students %	Control Students Cum %
11	36	16.5	16.5	40	16.3	16.3
12	88	40.4	56.9	107	43.7	60.0
13	69	31.6	88.5	78	31.8	91.8
14 or over	25	11.5	100.0	20	8.2	100.0
	218	100.0	100.0	245	100.0	100.0

Table 8-4

Age by Grade Analysis for Dropout and Control Group Students at Start of 1986-87 School Year*

Age**	Dropouts by Grade 9	10	11	12	TOT	Controls by Grade 9	10	11	12	TOT
21 & Over		1	2		3			1		1
20			5	2	7			1		1
19	2	7	14	7	30	1	2	4	2	9
18	9	35	12	6	62	3	11	1	9	24
17	25	34	8	3	70	2	13	22	9	46
16	3	4	1		8	15	31	18	2	66
15						8	35			43
14						16	2			18
TOTAL	39	81	42	18	180	45	94	47	22	208

* Special Education students, (38 in the dropout group and 37 in the control group) for whom age-by-grade is an inappropriate measure, are not included.

** Expected age on entering 9th grade is 14 years.

CHAPTER NINE

A QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT EXPERIENCES OVER TIME, ESPECIALLY DURING THE TRANSITION FROM MIDDLE SCHOOL TO HIGH SCHOOL

Michele G. Reich
Diana L. Stewart
Miriam Westheimer

SUMMARY

Purpose

The study was driven by three sets of concerns. First among them was a request from the Board of Education that we analyze student outcome data over time, especially during the time of interaction with the dropout prevention program services. A second concern emerged as one researcher chose to focus on the period defined as "over time" by looking at the transition from middleschool to high school. And finally, the project staff came to believe that the quantitative outcome data for students in the program was only a "partial truth," and that the quantitative effort, especially the longitudinal study, needed to be complemented by a qualitative one.

The overall intent was to understand the students' experience of school and the dropout program, to begin to identify those aspects of the transition which appear to be most crucial for students and to assess how the dropout prevention initiative intervenes or fails to intervene in the transition.

Methodology

Two rounds of open-ended interviews were conducted with students attending four DPI high schools: Schools 3, 5, 6, and 12. These schools were selected on the basis of program model (two modified systemic and two modified CBO), ethnic representation, borough representation, and the fact that all four were sites of other DPI evaluation studies being carried out simultaneously.

Sampling

We intended to use a stratified random sample of 36 students making the transition into the four high schools from program intermediate and junior high schools. These students were to have (1) been targeted for services in the terminal grade (eighth or ninth, depending on whether it was an intermediate or junior high school) of one of the feeder middle schools (2) responded to the Teachers College Intermediate/Junior High School Survey in Spring 1987, and (3) been targeted for services in one of the four designated high schools.

There were few students who met our sample criteria. In many cases the students who had been targeted in the feeder schools did not attend the designated high school. In other cases, students were no longer eligible for services. Still in other cases, students who did come from the feeder schools and had been targeted had not taken the survey. In order to increase the number of students eligible, we included students who had not taken the Teachers College survey in the middle school, but who had been targeted in both a feeder middle school and a high school. We also included six students who had not been targeted in the middle school (and thus not eligible to take the survey), but were targeted in high school.

Even when students did meet one or both of the basic criteria, i.e., targeted in the middle school and in the high school, they were often difficult to locate within the school. There were several reasons for this difficulty. First, students are admitted and discharged any time during the year, creating a fluid list. Second, students who are targeted can receive services which take them out of their classroom, if not out of the school. Third, students who have been targeted for DPP services, more often than not, have a higher than average rate of cutting and absenteeism, thereby decreasing the odds that students and researchers will be present on the same days. The group of students we interviewed became those who had been in the feeder schools and were most available in the high school. Our random stratified sample became a convenience sample.

Out of the 437 students who had been targeted in the intermediate/junior high feeder schools and had taken the survey, 127 entered the four high schools. Of this group, 30 were targeted for services in their high school. Somewhat higher proportions of the 358 students who were not surveyed (and thus more likely to have been lower attenders) entered the linked high schools (129) and were targeted for services there (42), a finding which is consistent with the fact that students who were more at risk were more likely to have to go to their zoned high school. Out of the 34 students we were able to contact and interview, 11 met all criteria, 13 met two criteria, and 4 met one criterion. Six students were targeted in high school only. Table I and Table II reflect a school by school breakdown of numbers of students we attempted to interview and those we actually interviewed.

There was a marked decrease in sample size from round one of the interviews (34) to round two (18). This decrease was the result of several factors. Five students could not be located on days when interviewers were at the schools. (Several attempts were made.) Three students were unaccounted for by school staff. Three students had been discharged by their schools. Two declined to be reinterviewed. One was thought to be planning a move to a state which had fewer requirements for high school graduation. One was thought to be at an off-site GED program, and one had dropped out of school.

It was during the process of trying to locate students that we began to realize the extent to which the school linkage component of DPP was not effective. Table I reveals that out of the 785 terminal grade students who had been targeted in their middle/junior high feeder schools, 256 students (approximately 33%) appeared on the high school roster during the fall semester and 72 students (less than 10%) were targeted for DPP services during their first year of high school. An important question not answered by this particular study is where did the more than 500 other students in a terminal grade go at the end of the year? An examination of this group might reveal what contributes to the large holes in the DPP net between the feeder schools and high schools. The longitudinal study of students' records will throw some light on this question, but it will call for further study.

Protocol

The first interview protocol focused on the transition between intermediate/junior high and high school. Students were asked about the first days of high school, differences between intermediate/junior high school and high school and any changes they would make in how the schools handle the transition. An additional interest on our part was to document any DPP services provided during the transition.

Student responses to the first protocol dictated the focus of the second protocol. A systematic content analysis of the first interviews highlighted several areas of concern for students beyond issues of transition and service delivery. Fifteen themes were identified. Ten of these occurred with great frequency and were selected as the focus of the second round of interviews (see Appendix). Using these themes as a guide, open-ended questions were designed to allow students the opportunity to speak in greater detail about those issues most salient for them.

The themes are:

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION: Student discussions of their school's reputation. Students used vivid images to describe their schools: "a boxing ring and a fashion show," wild," "a dirty school, physically and mentally," "a real bad reputation." Some students, while they agree that the school has a bad reputation, do not think that the reputation is well-founded and expressed strong feelings about going to a school with a bad reputation. On the other hand, a few students felt that their schools had good reputations and felt good about being a part of them.

SECURITY GUARDS: Student perceptions and feelings about the guards, their role, and student interactions with them. Issues included security vs. roughness and arbitrariness and curtailing vs. escalating violence. Students' comments reveal that guards are not simply viewed as good or bad. Rather a student's perception is related to their belief about whether they will benefit from the security guard's services.

GOOD TEACHERS/BAD TEACHERS: Student description of teacher performance. Repeatedly students described good teachers as those who take time to explain, who offer help and demonstrate care and concern for the student, who know their subject and care about education. The bad teacher fails to provide meaningful work, criticizes or jokes around, and does not have control over the classroom.

FEAR/TROUBLE/FIGHTING: Student feelings and descriptions of the violence that occurs in school including fears about violence. Whether a student is scared, maintaining a reputation or just trying to get through the day unharmed, most students described their schools as places in which trouble of some form is inevitable. The majority of those interviewed explained that it it was just impossible to avoid conflict. The specific scenes vary as do the interpretations; but the theme is one of the most dominant.

NAVIGATING THE SCHOOL: Student descriptions of their experience finding their way around a new school. Many students reported that navigating the school's structure (finding classrooms) as well as the academic structure (learning course requirements) is a major difficulty beginning with the first days of school.

RESPECT/DISRESPECT: Examples of adult respect or disrespect of students as expressed by students. Students are acutely aware that respect must be earned and is something that must balance between the parties involved.

PEERS: Student discussions of peer interactions. Some students are fond of their friends which motivates their attendance in school. Others however are not as positive on the subject of friends. Peer interaction constitutes a definitive social status that can impact on one's experience in school.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT: Student description of how families are involved in their school life. Families are reported to be involved in school selection and older siblings often function as guides, both in the physical navigation as well as the academic.

REASONS FOR DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL: Student discussions about why they drop out of school. Pressures from peers, parents, and teachers were emphasized. Two often-mentioned obstacles to persisting in school are pregnancy and family responsibility, including earning money. The desire to continue in school still exists after the birth of a child and even with financial responsibilities to one's family.

STUDENT RECOMMENDATIONS: Student suggestions for the improvement of school. Many and varied, some are curricular, structural in terms of the day, and personal in terms of better relationships with teachers.

TABLE I

SUMMARY OF STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR INTERVIEW

	School A	School B	School C	School D	TOTAL
# Targeted & Surveyed in Feeder Schools (1986-87)	196	50	149	42	437
# On high school roster (1987-88)	29	40	38	20	127
# Targeted in high school (1987-88)	1	21	5	3	30
************					
# Targeted & not surveyed in feeder schools (1986-87)	56	67	126	109	358
# On high school roster (1987-88)	17	46	39	27	129
# Targeted in high school (1987-88)	6	22	9	5	42

TABLE II

SUMMARY OF STUDENTS INTERVIEWED

	School A	School B	School C	School D
Total	10	11	7*	6
# Targeted in feeder school (1986-87)	5	6	0	2
# Surveyed & Targeted in feeder school (1986-87)	4	5	0	2
# Attended feeder -not targeted or surveyed (1986-87)	1	0	1	2

*6 Students were targeted in High School only.

Discussion

The Dropout Prevention Program as services received is not salient for these students, in fact, it was not mentioned by them. For this group of students, who have been labeled at risk by the program itself, DPP has not made an impression, particularly during the transition from middle school to high school. Other studies within the DPI evaluation corroborate this finding: one of the weakest and most criticized of the seven components in DPP is school linkage.

Perhaps DPI should play a stronger role in orientation and socialization, but our sense is that this is a school level issue. The students in this study describe their schools as difficult to negotiate on many levels. Some suggested several ways in which the school might be reorganized during the transition and for freshmen throughout that first year. Very few students reported going on tours of the high school either the spring before orientation or during the first few weeks of school. None of the students interviewed had had the opportunity to meet with high school staff while they were still in their feeder school. Some students suggested that a better matching of students and teachers might enable students to persist in school. Students in this study were not insensitive to the needs of their teachers. Perhaps teachers could give demonstration classes during summer orientation programs and again during the weeks of registration.

In an attempt to focus on the transition from intermediate/ junior high school to high school we asked the students to describe the differences between these two. While many students described their high schools as less than satisfactory, they characterized their junior high schools in even more negative terms. For better or for worse, high school is now their place. The recommendations that students make for changes in content, process and structure of the schools might be heard as an attempt to envision an environment in which the pressure to be someone else, out of fear or boredom, is mitigated, and a sense of belonging is developed.

CHAPTER TEN

THE STRUCTURING OF CONFLICT EVENTS IN AN URBAN HIGH SCHOOL

Miriam Westheimer

ABSTRACT

In his review of the research on dropout prevention initiatives, Rumberger (1987) lists factors which have been associated with dropping out of school. With the exception of one factor - schools being too dangerous - every other factor was related specifically to the individual who is dropping out. Predictable, policy response to this research has resulted in many programs which look to the individual or group of individuals involved while aiming to solve serious needs such as job training, job placement, guidance counseling, pregnancy care and crisis intervention. Do these programs which assume that when a teenager leaves school, one must find ways to teach, change or adapt the teenager so that s/he can come back and fit into the existing system address the heart of this deep-rooted problem? This question and its underlying assumptions are one which this substudy proposes to examine.

A classroom specifically designed for students labeled long term absentees in an urban high school provides the setting for this ethnographic substudy. The substudy focuses on teenagers and adults in various school settings, their interactions and the ways in which they negotiate their existing social order. This substudy does not begin with the assertion that in order to understand social phenomenon one must begin with understanding the personal or psychological characteristics of the behavior of individuals. Rather it asks how meaning is interpreted through social interaction; how students most at-risk of dropping out of school interact within their environment; and how students negotiate their social order in schools.

Data were collected in a manner consistent with the inductive theoretical methodology (Blumer, 1969) which is designed to allow questions to emerge from the social setting being studied. The data collection methods can be categorized into three general groups; ethnographic interviews, participant observation, and the collection of site documents.

In reviewing the data collected, an overwhelmingly dominant theme emerged. No matter what the discussion was about, somehow, some way students always introduced something about fights. They described fights they were in, fights they witnessed, fights they avoided - fights were everywhere. Data were analyzed by finding conflicts as a salient theme; identifying vignettes with a focused conflict; examining one in great detail; finding and elaborating on a pattern of social interaction; and examining the structural pattern with other data sources.

Conflict events were found to have various identifiable moments. They begin with a confrontation and are followed by a reaction which turns into verbal banter, labeled by students as a "dis." An intervention takes place which is described by defining the actor, the form and whether the intervention is with or without respect. Audience is a highly significant aspect of a conflict event. The event has a resolution - a fight or not a fight. The type of intervention and the presence of an audience are shown to be critical components in predicting the resolution of a conflict event.

The findings of this substudy have direct implications for conflict mediation programs. On one hand these programs empower students by allowing them to share the responsibility for the social interactions in the school. Project S.M.A.R.T. is seen to have been effective in reducing conflict in the schools by changing students' participatory roles in a conflict event. On the other hand, by focusing mediation training (which the observer took part in) solely on students, S.M.A.R.T. continued to blame the victim, the student. The research views conflict events as originating not just with students as individuals but in the larger social and curricular context of the school.

By changing one's focus from the characteristics of an individual to the necessary social interactions and meanings which structure those interactions, this study has presented another way of examining the serious dilemma faced by many urban high schools - violence. But, according to these findings, a fight is one moment in a complex, highly variable conflict event. A deeper understanding of this event might lead to a deeper understanding of the nature of violence in our schools and then, hopefully, to a change in the focus and nature of current discussion and policy-making. Such a change must turn our attention away from examining and, therefore, trying to change the individual to examining, and thereby changing the social institutions.

Introduction

In his review of dropout prevention initiatives, Rumberger (1987) lists factors which have been associated with dropping out. He divides them into categories of school-related, economic, personal and other. Yet, with the exception of "school being too dangerous" every subcategory was related specifically to the individual who is dropping out. (See also, Caplan and Nelson 1973.) Furthermore, Fine (1986) reports on an important ethnographic study of a group of South Bronx students who qualify for any of the given definitions of the "at-risk" category. In this study, Fine discovered individual differences between those who remained in school as compared to those who dropped out, differences which differ greatly from the factors cited from the other studies. She reports that "a moderate level of depression, an absence of political awareness, the presence of self blame, low assertiveness, and high conformity may tragically have constituted evidence of the 'good' urban student" (p. 215).

Policy response to the research as reported by Rumberger has resulted in many programs which look to the individual or group of students involved while aiming to solve serious needs such as job training, job placement, guidance counseling, pregnancy care, and crisis intervention. Some programs use material incentives in an attempt to induce teenagers to come to school. Others teach students techniques of conflict mediation as an attempt to decrease school suspensions, reduce violence in the schools and share the responsibility with students. Do these solutions which assume that when a teenager leaves school one must find ways to teach, change or adapt the teenager so that s/he can come back and fit in to the existing system address the heart of this deep-rooted problem? This question and its underlying assumptions are ones which this substudy proposes to examine.

Erikson (1986) suggests that an interpretive approach to research requires one to ask different types of questions:

> What are the conditions of meaning that students and teachers create together, as some students appear to learn and others don't...How is it that it can make sense to students to learn in one situation and not in another? How are these meaning systems created and sustained in daily interaction? (p. 127)

This substudy does not begin with the assertion that in order to understand social phenomena one must begin with understanding the personal or psychological characteristics of the behavior of individuals. Rather it asks how meaning is interpreted through social interaction; how students most at-risk of dropping out of school interact within their environment; and how students negotiate their social order in schools.

The purpose of this research, a substudy of the New York City Dropout Prevention Evaluation Project,[1] is to examine the

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lived experience (Greene, 1978) of students in a transitional class for returning long-term absentees in a New York City high school. Since all such students find themselves enrolled in this transitional class - an integral part of the dropout prevention program and of the school itself - this classroom was initially observed as part of the evaluation project. Over time it also served as an important entry point from which to begin to observe the interactions of those students who have already been designated as "at-risk."

Gaining an understanding of social interactions is made possible by planning a study whose data rely on observing and interviewing the students. The purpose is to gain insight into meanings underlying their "mutually constructed behavior" (Mehan, 1978). Through this developed understanding, the findings of this research will explore existing interactional patterns.

The finding and analyzing of salient patterns of behavior can lend itself to a deeper, richer and more grounded understanding of the experiences of these students. By shifting the focus away from an individual's characteristic and behavior and towards the social structure and cultural understandings which permit such behavior, it is the hope that future educational decision-making can be made which will better respond to the needs of at-risk students.

Setting: The School

An inner-city school, Wilson Hill High School[2] (WHHS) is an old, well-built and architecturally attractive building facing three other large public schools, a large well-maintained public garden and a renowned art museum. The contrast between the front of the school building and its rear reflects the disparity in available resources. The view walking to the front entrance from the local public transporation stop is scenic and tranquil: trees, flowers, magnificent old, large buildings. On the same block, but on the back side of the school, the view is quite different: burned-down buildings, littered streets, boarded windows. The front is quiet, sometimes almost abandoned, as one walks down the street. The back is bustling. People are out shopping, talking, sitting, walking. Still, there are small signs of one side blending in with the other. In the front, some

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1. The Dropout Prevention Initiative (DPI) is a major effort in reducing New York's dropout rate. An evaluation of DPI is coordinated by the Institute for Urban and Minority Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, under the direction of Professor Joseph C. Grannis.

2. Wilson Hill High School (WHHS) is a psuedonym used to protect the privacy of the staff and students who shared their daily lives, thoughts and concerns with me. All names of people and places in the WHHS community have also been changed.

of the walls of the beautiful structures are decorated with intricate graffiti. In the back, amidst the littered streets, community people tend two lovely neighborhood gardens.

WHHS has a mixed student population: Black Americans, Panamanians, Jamaicans and Haitians. The immediate neighborhood is also mixed, each group keeping primarily to itself with the exception of the Black Americans who mingle with the Panamanians and the Jamaicans but not with the Haitians. The Haitians seem to be the most isolated from the other groups.

One of ten schools chosen city-wide to participate in a quasi-experiment of different models of dropout prevention programs (DPP), WHHS maintains a reputation of being an "unsuccessful" school. Students don't choose WHHS. Many faculty would prefer teaching somewhere else. And parents are not pleased about their children being in this school. WHHS was chosen for involvement in DPP because of its high dropout rate and recognized ability to improve with support and funding.

WHHS's DPP model consisted of a dropout prevention facilitator and two community-based organizations (CBOs) placed within the school. The school targeted close to 700 students as at-risk of dropping out and all programs were oriented towards those students even though many other students may be tangentially involved. One CBO provided counseling and job training in a case management approach; the other trained students as conflict mediators and held private hearings in an attempt to resolve disputes in the school.

Wilson Hill High School has a high principal turnover rate: six principals in five years prior to the dropout prevention evaluation project. During the second year of my study, the principalship was again turned over. The principal, who was for the most part liked by the staff and the students, took a leave of absence due to a death in the family. He returned to find that he had been replaced. There is a core of teachers who have been at Wilson Hill for fifteen years or more, and yet, almost half of the faculty are temporary and not licensed.

Setting: The Classroom

Because of my role as evaluator, I initially chose a class which was central to this school's dropout prevention program. All returning students and "long-term absentees" were enrolled in this transitional class. The two teacher positions for this class were funded by the program and all the students in the class were eligible for DPP services. During the first evaluation year the class registered on average 35-40 students, but rarely had more that 10-15 students on any given school day. The size of the potential pool, as well as the manageable number of students to encounter each day, both contributed to the choice of the classroom as an entry point[3] .

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3. The number of students enrolled into the transitional

Two teachers share the academic instruction of this class. One (Ms. Grace) is a black, experienced female teacher who frequently shared her opinions about the class, the program, and her role with me. During the initial evaluation year, she welcomed me to observe or participate in her class whenever I wanted. The other teacher (Mr. Leslie) is a white, beginning male teacher who saw my presence as supervision for him rather than as an evaluation year, we managed to balance our discussions between his reflecting on his teaching and his discussion of the class and the program.

It is the combination of the contained setting, that is, the opportunity to see the same students many times, and the rapport that was already developed with the teachers that made this setting a possible place to begin my investigation.

Data Collection

In ethnographic research the processes of collecting and analyzing data cannot be separated. They are done concurrently with one continuously informing the other. The analysis of observations of one social event will determine the direction of future data collection. This approach to qualitative inquiry begins with open-ended questions rather that with hypotheses. Data are generated and scrutinized concurrently through an inductive process designed to produce theoretical ideas. In essence, grounded theory research focuses on the discovery of substantive categories relevant to the phenomenon under investigation. This methodology permits categories and themes to be construed directly from the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Still, for the purpose of clarification it is useful to discuss these separately. The data collection methods can be categorized into these general groups: ethnographic interview, participant observation, and the collection of site documents.

1. Ethnographic Interview

Ethnographic interviewing as described by Spradely (1979) in his developmental research sequence is a process whereby the ethnographer learns about the culture of the chosen social setting through a series of steps. While the specific steps were not followed obediently, they did serve as a useful reference point to help distinguish ethnographic interviewing from other types of interviewing. More specifically, these served as constructive guidelines to the process of interviewing.

Spradely notes the importance of finding "good" informants. he speaks of requirements for locating an informant: The person must be thoroughly encultured in the social setting being studied, should be currently involved in the scene, should have adequate time and availability and should be put in a situation

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classroom turned out to be dramatically different during the second year.

which allows him/her to speak openly and honestly.

An ethnographic interview is differentiated from a friendly conversation by the following features: Turn taking is less balanced. Repeating replaces the normal rule of avoiding repetition. Expressing interest and ignorance occur more often but only on the part of the ethnographer. In place of the normal practice of abbreviating, the ethnographer encourages expanding on what each person says.

I had several occasions early in the second year to speak informally with students, individually and in groups. Usually this happened when a teacher did not show up for class and no substitute was available or when students were found hanging out in the halls, in the schoolyard or on the stairs. Some of these ethnographic interviews were taped and transcribed. Others were recorded from memory as soon after the discussion as possible.

2. Participant Observations

Participant observation comprised the next most frequently used method of data collection. Observations in ethnographic research are sometimes distinguished between participant and nonparticipant. Participant observations occur when the researcher actively interacts with the participants. Non participant observation is meant to describe those situations in which the observer does not actively (or consciously) interact within the social setting. Based on my own experience, I question the feasibility of nonparticipant observation. Every time I observed in a classroom for any other social setting, I found that in some way I also interacted with it. It is impossible to both be somewhere and pretend that it is the same as if you were not. Still, my observations varied greatly with the degree of participation. There were occasions for me to sit in the classroom and observe without playing any formal role, the more traditional sense of classroom observation. yet, even when placing myself in a corner in the back of the room, I was a frequent target for comments, glances, questions and occasionally, even lengthy discussions. There were other situations in which the observant role was less obvious. I accompanied some students to lunch or to special events in the school and then the participant side of the participant-observer dominated. In addition, I had several opportunities to meet with and interview groups of students at which time my role was some combination of researcher/teacher/counselor. All of these roles were made as explicit as possible to all involved. While it is important to keep a record of the role played while different data are collected, it was not always possible to do so. As a counter measure I kept a persona journal throughout that helped me not only keep track of my perception of my role at the time of the interaction but also of the feelings and impressions I had as the research progressed.

3. Site Document Collection

In addition, for the sake of triangulating the data, I randomly collected any site documents that came my way. This method of data collection is considered an unobtrusive measure, because one does not in any way interfere with the social setting. The documents serve as yet another source to confirm or raise questions about the interactional patterns which ultimately emerge.

The type of site document which can be collected varies from study to study. In this study, they appear to be quite random. Since I did not know what the final focus of the reported findings would be, I collected any and all documents from the setting. Some turned out to be very useful; others were not. Documents varied from administrative lists to different scribbles, such as writings and drawings left by students on a desk or on the floor in the classroom. There was no systematic method to the collection of these documents. I simply kept my eyes open and whenever possible asked for or picked up extra copies of: student lists, classroom hand-outs, staff memos, school newspapers, Board of Education fliers, posters on the walls, student magazines and occasional notes left around the school.

Data Analysis

1. Finding the salient theme

As one might assume, data gathered from the methods described above over a period of two years would lead to many different and potentially interesting directions. The first task, then, is to begin to find a focus for the analysis. This was one of the hardest tasks to accomplish throughout this study.

The issue of conflict emerged as a salient theme not only in my data but in the qualitative and quantitative finding from other substudies of the larger evaluation project as well. During the first round of longitudinal interviews, nearly every student made some reference to conflict. It often, but not always, concerned fighting and general safety in the school. Our program-wide surveys also found students reporting seeing violence in the school frequently. In my own initial interviews and observations, I found that regardless of the topic being discussed, in or out of the classroom, somehow, someway violence, fighting and conflict became the focus. In fact, one student almost said as much in a group interview. After being told by another student that the best way to get around is to "mind your business," she said:

> Well, sometimes you can't really do that in this school, like mind your business cause, even if you mind your business somehow, some way, somebody'll get you into it.

My experience was the same. Obviously, as this focus became clearer I encouraged the direction of the discussions but conflict was as strong a focus of the earlier conversations and observations, when I had not made this decision, as it was afterwards.

2. Identifying vignettes with conflict

The next step was to isolate temporarily the scenes of conflict from the rest of the data. At this stage, a scene of conflict was very loosely defined. It was any description of a fight, an argument, a display of anger or a reaction to any of those. Soon after, I limited these to focused conflicts. That is, the conflict had to be about a certain event, moment, action or thought. I eliminated general statements of conflicts such as: "School pisses me off." These kids are always destroying things." Based on my interviews and observations, I initially found thirty-five conflict events.

3. Examine one in great detail

Next I chose one event which seemed particularly "loaded." I began to read it over and over, always thinking about and looking for a pattern that might emerge. Based on the theoretical assumption that social behavior is mutually constructed, the purpose was to find a pattern of behavior, a pattern that illustrates the social and cultural preconditions to the observable behavior. I started to make sense of one conflict event by establishing a pattern and then seeing how many other conflict events could be described by that pattern. When I could not go very far, I changed my direction. When the pattern started to explain other events I continued on that track.

I began by labeling different parts of the pattern by numbers, rearranging and juggling the order whenever necessary. I then labeled the parts, choosing words which clarified for me their function in the pattern. It is important to note that the labels given to the different moments of the pattern are imposed from without not taken from the language of the participants. Confrontation, reaction, intervention, resolution and audience became the analytic tools I used as I continued to expand my understanding of these pieces of social interaction.

4. Finding and elaborating on a pattern of social interaction

Once a basic pattern was established, the other conflict events were analyzed to determine both how they fit the existing pattern and how they contributed to a richer and fuller understanding of that pattern. It was at this point that I discovered the need to separate focused and unfocused conflicts. Unfocused conflicts excluded from the analysis included general statements or descriptions about fights or conflicts. For example, one of the earliest clues to conflict as theme was one girl describing the school as a combination of a "boxing ring and a fashion show." Statements such as these are not focused conflict and were excluded from the structural analysis. In addition, initially I excluded students talking about how they had fought in general. Statements describing a general state of affairs rather than a specific incident were not included among the conflict events. Later with the introduction of the hypothetical situations, they become a significant part of the analysis. Focused conflicts must have a specific incident that is happening, being described, or in some way discussed. These focused conflicts fit some part of the larger pattern.

5. Expanding the pattern to fit other data sources

Having thoroughly analyzed the ten chosen conflict events, the pattern of interaction was applied to reported interviews done by other researchers in other schools - specifically, the hypothetical situation analysis from the four schools in the longitudinal sample (Appendix A). First descriptions or explanations of the different moments of the conflict event were examined. The purposes was to expand or confirm the existing established pattern. The pattern would be expanded or contradicted if new or conflicting information was presented. The pattern would be confirmed if different researchers heard students in different settings speak similarly about fights. This process resulted in the confirmation of the pattern and the explanations.

Findings: The Structure of a Conflict Event

A fight does not just happen. Two people do not encounter one another and then simply decide to throw or not to throw punches. Rather, these data show that fighting is but one moment in a highly complex, socially constructed event that involves several players and can take several different directions given the nature and form of each moment in the process. An event in this chapter has a specific meaning and focus and can be best explained in contrast to experience.

> There has been a tendency ... to assign experience a sense of objectivity so that experience becomes invested with reality, in contrast to stories, which are supposedly understood subjectively. This unfortunate tendency has led scholars to confuse events with experiences, as though one could experience an event. Events are ways of categorizing experience; in a sense, the category "event" makes experience accessible to understanding by providing a language for talking about experience (Shuman, 1986, p. 20).

By examining several conflict events in great detail, a basic common pattern emerged. This section will describe this pattern, provide supportive data and elaborate on the finding to generalize to other available data. General statements made about the moments in a conflict event apply to those analyzed here alone. Such statements are an attempt to clarify the emerging pattern and to generalize within these data. They are not generalizable statements about any or all conflicts anywhere.

Moments in the Conflict Event

The following is a definition of and elaboration on each individual moment in the conflict event. The labels are presented before the descriptions which generated the labels. This is the reverse of the actual process which took place, but is used to provide the reader with a point of reference from which to approach the following detailed descriptions. Clearly, each piece of data that is offered has examples of moments other than the one being discussed. However, since a later section will present a detailed and integrated analysis of all moments in a conflict event, for purposes of clarification and focus, this section will artificially isolate each one.

1. Confrontation

A conflict event begins with a confrontation. In some way, the routine or the accepted pattern of behavior is broken. For example, a confrontation can be an invasion of personal space by moving too close to another person, a threat to one's reputation by public name-calling, or a deviation from the normative expected behavior such as inappropriate glances for misplaced comments. Taken out of context, descriptions of confrontations in this data sample include:

> ..he kept picking on me, looking at me, kissing at me..
> ..they was talking too much junk and getting to loud..
> ..Where'd you get them Hush Puppy old man shoes? They hot?
> Why she eyeing me?
> This girl bumped into me.

While they do not label it as such, students are aware of confrontations. They describe them as being all around them and very difficult to avoid. During one group interview when the students were talking about the reputation of their school and how it influenced their job interviews, one student said that Wilson High is not really such a bad place.

> Helena: If you mind your business.
> Frank: Yeah, if you mind your business.
> Helena: Well, sometimes you can't really do that in this school, like mind your business cause, even if you mind your business somehow some way somebody'll get you into it.
> Karina That's true.
> Helena: Somebody will get you into it. It could be a person that you sit behind in your classroom and they see you in the lunchroom, right? They say, oh well me and her was talking in class today and she said such and such about. And you didn't even have to say it. You probably could have said well me and that person don't get along. Well she called you a

bitch, you know.
Miriam: And that's enough to get a fight going.
Helena: Yeah.
Karina: Oh yup, that's enough.
Shanon: That's enough.
[12/9/87; interview scheduled, semi-structured, audio-taped]

Explaining why one cannot avoid fights in school and why she always seems to be in trouble, Lorelle says:

Lorelle: Umhmm, cause there was always somebody messing with me and I'm, I'm the type of person that will sit back and let the person say until, you know, say
Shanon: a lot
Lorelle: say all they want to say until it just boils up inside of me and that's when I just get up and we fighting and everybody, they used to always bring me down and I've been suspended and I always, my mother always come.
[10/26/87; interview: open-ended, unscheduled, audio-taped]

Confrontations are also used to explain absence from school. Not coming to school is one definite way to avoid inevitable confrontations.

Helena: This school is a trip.
Miriam: Is what? A trip.
Helena: It's a trip. You see, cause, like I'll stop coming, the reason why I'll be absent is cause, it's not cause of the teachers, it's not cause of the work, it's cause of the students. You know. I have a lot of enemies in this school. It's a lot of girls in this school that do not like me, you know, but they won't bother me, you know, when I come by, you know, they'll be smiling, you know, pretending they be talking to they friends but as soon as I pass by [imitating students' laughter], you know, I'm like, uhhhuhh, as long as you don't put your hands on me I ain't going to worry about what you think cause I don't care what nobody say about me cause can't nobody tell them about me but me, you know,
Miriam: Mmmhmm
Helena: and, you know, when I first got into school, my first two years in this school, I stopped coming to school cause I was scared cause these girls was like planning to jump me so I stopped coming to school. Umm, you know, I never told my mother this. But.. you know, she used to think I was just playing hooky to be playing hooky but it wasn't like that. It was cause I was scared. But then the third, my third year, when I came back, I was like I ain't

gonna let nobody rob me away from my education. If it, if it comes down to me fighting, I'm just going to have to fight. If I get jumped I get jumped but I'm gonna come back and get mine.
Miriam: Mmhmm.
Karina: Too much fighting in this school.
Helena: It is.
Karina: Too much violence, period.
[12/9/87; interview: scheduled, semi-structured, audi-taped]

Confrontations are all around. As Helena says, "Somehow some way somebody'll get you into it." Similarly, Lorelle feels that there's "always somebody messing" with her. Helena describes a confrontation of other girls talking about her as being so bothersome it caused her to stop coming to school. She was scared of being jumped.

2. Reaction

A confrontation is followed by a reaction. A reaction is defined more by its place in the conflict event than by its quality. What happens immediately after the confrontation is a reaction. Frequently, in the data analyzed, the reaction is what I have labeled *verbal banter*, that is, a series of quick verbal exchanges back and forth between those involved with the confrontation. Sometimes it can be understood as a playful tease.

> ...you see people in the hallway and they argue and say this and this and this but it may look like it's gonna be a real fight but it's not they're just playing some, some of the time you can't, you can't really tell. When, yo man you this and that. No, you this and that. They come up into each other's face...
> [12/9/87; interview: semi-structured, audio-taped]

Verbal banter, then, is the "this and that" described above. During the early stages of observation, I was struck by the amount of verbal banter I heard in the classroom. While at that time I was unaware of its place in the conflict event, I was curious about its role in classroom interaction. The following excerpt of a conflict event is an example of verbal banter:

Tawana: Where'd you get them Hush Puppy old man shoes? They hot?
Malik: Old man shoes? Man, these are chill. These ain't no Hush Puppy. These are Clarks. Real Clarks.
Tawana: Clark who?
Malik: Clark shoes. You ain't heard of Clark shoes?
Tawana: No.
Malik: Shows where you're at.
Tawana: I know ugly shoes when I see them.
Nick: [After talking briefly with someone at the door, gets a pass and leaves the classroom.]

Malik: Man, these were expensive.
Tawana: Still ugly.
Tawana: Bet they hot.
Malik: Shit, what's the matter with you. I bought these shoes. I work for these shoes. I'm a messenger. I don't depend on nobody. Not like others I know.
Tawana: Whatch'u sayin? You sayin....
Malik: All I'm sayin' is I bought these shoes with my money. My money is really my money. And with my money I can buy these shoes and anything else I want. I don't ask nobody for no money. Not like..
Tawana: Now you better watch you mouth. I don't like what I'm hearing.
Nick: [walks back into the room.] Y'all still disin'?

As in this example, verbal banter can quickly turn into a dis. A dis, I learned from the participant informants, is a verbal insult intending to show disrespect (Appendix B). As in the above example, frequently when the banter turns into a dis, one of the members of the immediate social group will label it as such.

In this example, the reaction took the form of verbal banter which became a dis as Tawana began insulting Malik by calling his shoes ugly. In fact, in this example the banter was always close to a dis. It is my belief that the dissin' started when Tawana called Malik's shoes ugly. Nick, who labeled the dis, left the room before the interaction got more heated. Since he commented on the dissin' still going on when he returned, it must have started before he left.

3. Intervention

Among all the moments in a conflict event, the intervention was the most important and the most difficult to identify. The type of intervention is a regulating factor in the conflict event. Interventions vary the most and, I will argue, have the most to do with the eventual resolution of the conflict event. As a result, great attention was given to try and isolate different features of the intervention. An intervention was found to have an actor, a form and a nature.

Actors fall into three categories: peers, adults, and self. Peers can be subdivided into friend, enemy and stranger. Adults can be subdivided into teacher, security guard, other school personnel, and parent.

Interventions took one of three forms: verbal, non-verbal and physical or some combination of those three. For example, telling two students who had just begun a verbal banter to stop is a common example of verbal intervention. Removing one person from any moment in the conflict event is a physical intervention.

Combinations of verbal and physical also exist. For example, telling a student that he would be better off walking away from the conflict event while putting one's arm around his shoulder would be both verbal and physical intervention.

Finally, I have categorized the nature of an intervention as *with or without respect*. This distinction is difficult to define but when examined provides a reliable predictor of the type of resolution. For example, after the confrontation and bantering reaction over the Hush Puppy incident described above, the teacher intervened several times. She told them to stop three times, threatened to call the security guard twice and did call the security guard once. The teacher gave them instructions to stop and, since her instructions were not carried out, she found a way to enforce them. She did not allow those involved in the conflict event to participate in the regulation of subsequent events. The teacher took complete control. By doing so, her intervention was without respect for those involved in the conflict event. At the moment that the teacher intervened without respect, Tawana and Malik both verbally threatened to start fighting. When the security guards arrived and were told to remove Tawana from the classroom, they intervened by asking if they could have the opportunity of talking with her. They asked if Tawana could re-enter the classroom providing she agreed to behave and to resolve the conflict event quietly. This intervention allowed Tawana to be a part of the regulation of events. In this case, then, the security guards intervened with respect.

This conflict event involving Tawana and Malik actually had two different interventions. The first (1) by the teacher and the second (2) by the security guard. Each intervention can be depicted schematically:

(1) adult (teacher) / verbal / without respect
(2) adult (security guard) / verbal and physical / with respect

I have labeled the second verbal and physical because the intervention in the conflict event which was between two students was physical; one of the students was removed. It was also verbal; the security guard spoke with Tawana outside the classroom.

With respect here refers to the way Tawana was left feeling. First of all, by offering to talk things over, Tawana's own ability to handle herself was given credence. Secondly, she could re-enter the room without "losing face." The reverse of this, "keeping face," is frequently described by the participants in this study as crucial to survival in the school. An intervention that allows one to "keep face" is labeled with respect; an intervention that causes one to "lose face" is labeled without respect. Students frequently expressed their understanding of this subtle yet crucial differentiation.

Frank: Here? Here it's like you just gotta mind your business. Look if he's fighting and he's alone just leave it like that you know you can't do nothing. It's hard. The only thing you could do is probably go for help and that's it.
Miriam: Go for help?
Frank: Yeah.
Miriam: Where would you go?
Frank: Or call somebody big or the principal or whatever. But don't let them find out that you was the one that went and called for somebody. And you know like if I [tape is interrupted]
Miriam: There's a lot of
Frank: Mix.
Miriam: security in this building.
Frank: Yup.
Karina: Mmmm.
Miriam: Right? Does that help, does that do anything?
Frank: Nope.
[12/9/87; interview: semi-structured, audio-taped]

Frank is helping me understand that the most important aspect of successfully bringing in help to stop the fight is to be sure that no one knows how help was brought. This allows those involved in the conflict event to "keep face". In addition, one must always be willing to fight or at least pretend that one is.

Frank: ...if there's a fight and [inaudible] the fight ... I try to avoid it. But it's real hard to avoid it because the next day it be like - you know you scared of him and everybody be saying, 'Oh, he soft. I can pick on him...'
Karina: And it's like me I don't have to show up. I like people they know me.
I don't really talk to them but they know alright she fight you know.
Miriam: So you get like a reputation?
Karina: Like a lot of people that run will say well she's a fighter.
Miriam: That protects you a little bit is that what you're saying.
Karina: Sort of, yeah, I guess that's what it does exactly.
Miriam: It keeps people
Karina: away... I felt that umm I had to make that kind of reputation maybe a little bit, you know..

Creating a sense of identity can also be found in interventions. Developing a reputation, letting people know who you are and that you are not afraid are all part of the conflict event. This distinction between intervention with and without respect can give a student clues about how his/her identity is viewed by others.

An intervention takes place some time between the beginning of the reaction and the beginning of the resolution. Through the analyzed conflict events that follow, I will argue that the same intervention with the same initial reaction but with different interventions will lead to different resolutions.

4. Resolution

Conflict events end with a resolution which also varies. Resolutions include walking away from the event, continuing whatever activity was happening before the event started and having a physical fight. For purposes of this analysis the important distinction is between having a physical fight and not having a physical fight. As each conflict event is analyzed, its schematic representation will show how the event was resolved. The purpose is to establish a pattern and to show that conflict events are resolved by physical fights only when the intervention is without respect and when there is an audience.

5. Audience

In addition to an intervention without respect, an audience must be present for a conflict event to be resolved by a physical fight. From the analysis of all the conflict events, there is not one physical fight that occurred without an audience. While given different names, audience is labeled as such by the participant informants:

Helena: And then they call and whoever else she going along and then the crowd comes right along behind them and then that person see a crowd automatically they will go swing on you and if you don't
Miriam: Is that the support? Is that what?
Helena: Yeah, cause, cause they got all these
Karina: *friends watches*, you know, *fight fans*.
Helena: you know, they just there and
Karina: you know, and then they got all these watches, you know what I'm saying, you know fight fans.
Frank: I seen
Helena: That why I say it's like a boxing match.

The *crowd*, *fight fans*, and *fight watches* are all different names for what I have labeled an audience. Sometimes students about to start a fight will go and gather the "fight watches" and other times the crowd seems to appear on its own. In one of the examples above, a student said, "Yeah, as soon as there's a fight, everybody's looking." But actually, from close examination of these conflict events, the fight doesn't even start until "everybody's looking."

The analysis of the responses to the hypothetical situation in the longitudinal sample provides abundant support for this.

Students say that the shouting will not turn into a fight if there's no one there to see it. The timing of the argument, therefore, in relation to the pending ringing of the bell was mentioned as an indicator of whether or not a fight would start. When asked why the students in the hypothetical situation might be fighting, one student said:

> They're probably just trying to screen each other out. Trying to make someone look bad. Then, you get embarrassed and you'd be forced to fight'em. It's probably just a small reason, but when you get in front of people it gets really loud and you start fighting.

According to this student, the confrontation might have been very small but there is always a chance of a *dis* (get embarrassed, look bad). The fight starts, however, only when you "get in front of people".

Another student explained that if she were in the situation she would walk away. The interviewer asked if that would be a hard thing to do to which she replied, "Sometimes, not when you're by yourself but with other people around."

The role played by the audience seems to be a necessary but not sufficient component if the conflict event is to be resolved by a physical fight. Peer pressure and the importance of "keeping face" in the presence of others play an important part. Putting this in the perspective of a socially constructed pattern, audience, like an intervention without respect, when identified in the pattern have shown to be likely predictors of a physical fight.

Analysis of Conflict Events

This next section will present, describe and analyze two conflict events found in the data collected for this study. Since they are all taken directly from the lived lives of the participant informants, they are not all "good, clean" examples of each moment. Some offer an overview of the whole conflict event, while the others highlights a few moments and does not provide any additional insight into other moments. The purpose here is not to present ten conflict events that perfectly fit each moment in the pattern, but rather to show that each little piece in some way fits into the larger pattern of social interaction.

Each one begins with a "pure" description of the conflict event; that is, the description is taken directly from fieldnotes, classroom observations and interviews. The purpose is to let the reader "experience" as closely as possible the event without being interrupted by analysis and discussion.

The description is followed by an analysis. A schematic representation of the intervention (actor, form, and nature) and the resolution begins each analysis section, which then continues to identify and elaborate the various moments described in the previous section.

Conflict Event #1: Long as they don't touch me

I have chosen one particularly "loaded" conflict event to begin this more detailed discussion. There are several reasons for the choice of starting with this event. First of all, it allows the reader to identify and become more familiar with all the moments described above. Secondly, it is a complete conflict event; that is, all the moments are either presented by the participants or were observed by me. Thirdly, this event took place early on in the second research year (10/26/87) at a time when I had no idea what the eventual focus of my analysis would be. It is, therefore, free from the potential bias of probing which may have taken place later on in the year. Finally, this first conflict event appeared in my field notes several times under several different categories and from several different sources: I was in the school the day it happened and saw the scene just after the event. I spoke with one of the participants right after the event and right before her next class. I was present at a case conference of the school staff when they were discussing this event. A few months after the event, one of the participants happened to be in one of my audio-taped group interviews (12/9/87) and began to discuss the event in great detail. All of these data sources led me to strongly rely on the validity of this account. The following description is based on all of these different data sources.

> Description
> During the 5th period in Ms. Grace's classroom, I noticed that Helena was sitting with her head in her hands. I asked her if she was alright. She nodded her head yes but when she looked up she had a red eye and looked very upset. I asked again if she needed any help. She said no and then continued to tell me what had happened:
>
> Helena started to tell me that she got into a fight with a Jamaican boy (Michel) in Mr. Leslie's class. She said Michel was staring at her since Friday and bothering her. He started cursing at her. Then he walked out of the room. She closed the door. He broke the window of the door and jumped in through the window. They started to fight. (10/26/87); fieldnotes, classroom observation.)

Several weeks after this event, Helena was part of a group interview during which the students were discussing different reasons for starting a fight. Sharon said that she never gets into fights because she just walks away and I tried to give an extreme example to see if she might have a different reaction. Helena then described her fight.

Miriam: What if somebody called you a bitch?
Sharon: I just walk away with it as long as they don't touch me.
Helena: that's how I fell. As long as they don't hit me.
Sharon: Long as they don't touch me.
Helena: They don't have no problem but when they touch me...
Sharon: Yup.
Helena: That's when they have a problem. Cause now you getting physical.
And all you doing is running your mouth and...
Miriam: And no one's ever touched you.
Sharon: Nope.
Helena: In my school, in the four, in the four years I've been to this school I only had one fight - and that's this fight with this guy in class.
Miriam: This year?
Helena: Yeah.
Miriam: That was, I was, we, we spoke right after that remember?
Helena: Yeah. Umm. He he asked for it cause he kept picking on me,
looking at me, kissing at me and I don't like
Karina: [inaudible]
Helena: and I didn't like him. I couldn't stand him and he (kissing noises) and
staring at me [laughter] and all of this.
Frank: [inaudible]
Helena: And in the lunch room he bumped into me right? I say you bumped and he laughing and joking with his friend bumped into me right? So then I says you bumped into me. He turned to me all stupid and went to grab me for my chest.
Karina: Oh shit.
Helena: He bumped me in my chest and went to grab for my chest to say sorry to me. And everybody looking'. That's what got me really offended. That's why I really didn't like him and then when he started..
Miriam: I can understand that.
Helena: Staring at me from across the classroom and throwing kisses at me and I I told him..

[One side of the tape ended and I didn't notice. According to my memory of the conversation about 5 minutes elapsed when Helena was still talking about the fight she had and how it all got started. It continues...I remember that she said the fight had started and some students pushed him out of the room and closed the door shut. Then he broke the glass window next to the door leading into the classroom and jumped in through the broken window. I was there that day. I saw the broken glass on the floor. I also saw Helena right after the fight in her next class and we spoke a little.]

> Helena: Yeah, and I picked up a chair. I did. [laughter] What would you say someone jumping through a window at you? What you, your first reaction gonna be? Pick up anything that's closest to you. [laughter]
>
> Karina: Right. [laughter]
>
> Helena: I picked up a chair. [laughter] I'm serious. [laughter]. I'm serious. I picked up a chair threw it at him. And then after he got over the shock of the chair, he just started fighting. He tried to pull my jacket off of my head but I snuffed him in his face. Then he caught me in my eye but that's all he got off of me.
>
> Miriam: I saw that.
>
> Helena: Caught me in my eye. I punched him in the head and pushed him against [laughter] the lockers. And then all I remember is the security guard. Cause I didn't even seen them coming in cause I was over there [motions of fighting] [laughter] I was... that was an incident boy.
>
> Karina: Oh yeah.
>
> Helena: He's lucky, he's lucky they came when they did cause I was about to try and trip his ass and pick up another chair and ummm.. demolish.
>
> [12/9/87; scheduled, taped, group interview]

The same day of the incident I attended a staff meeting and heard Mr. Leslie present his view of what had happened. The whole incident was discussed for about five minutes.

> One teacher said that trouble had been brewing for a while. He explained that one can usually predict when a fight will start or when students are leading in that direction. He said that as soon as he saw the tension starting, he separated them in the room and told them that they were not allowed to speak to one another in his classroom. He warned them that if they continued fooling around he would have them thrown out of his room. They wouldn't stop and he told them that they were acting like little children. He said he can't understand how these high school students "act out every little thing." This teacher then asked his colleagues what else one might do in such a situation. Another teacher responded sympathetically explaining that she has two girls in her room with children from the same man and they are always after each other. She has asked for weeks to have them separated; that is, put into different classrooms. She said, "Their personal histories make it impossible for them to be in one class without major disruptions. They've already had two fights and I know we're headed for the next one.
> [10/26/87, general observation]

Analysis

adult (teacher)/ verbal / without respect
---> FIGHT
audience

The confrontation in this event is somewhat more prolonged than in others. Helena describes its beginning as "he kept picking on me, looking at me, kissing at me." These were behaviors which she interpreted as interfering with her own regular routine in the classroom and at school. Her reaction to this intervention seems to have been ignoring it. It did not lead to bantering or a *dis* like many others. But it did not lead to another more threatening confrontation. Helena makes it very clear that the initial confrontation with personal space was not enough to start a fight. It was the physical confrontation which, she explains, she could not tolerate. Before she began to tell the group about this experience she spoke about her feelings in general:

> As long as they don't hit me. They don't have no problem but when they touch me...that's when they have a problem. Cause now you getting physical.

Then she continued to describe how she finally got provoked to the fight:

> And in the lunch room he bumped into me right? I say you bumped and he laughing and joking with his friend bumped into me right? So then I says you bumped into me. He turned to me all stupid and went to grab me for my chest... He bumped me in my chest and went to grab for my chest to say sorry to me. And everybody looking'. That's what got me really offended.

After this confrontation, Helena reacted by telling Michel what he had done. Perhaps she was still trying to resolve the confrontation without fighting. His reaction was to take it even one step further and grab for her chest. It was the next period that they started to fight.

The resolution in this conflict event is a physical fight. It took place in the classroom not in the lunchroom where many fights do take place. Apparently, Helena was in the room when Michel started to fight and still another intervention occurred. Some students pushed him out of the room and Helena closed the door. This intervention is certainly without respect. But the intervention takes place during the resolution. Trying to break up a fight is also an intervention, but it intervenes with the resolution, not before. The fight had already started. The intervention in this case does not have the same role of determining the type of resolution which might occur. There are only a few examples of trying to break up a fight. The rules appear to be different at this moment in the conflict event; differentiating between keeping and losing face is more severe once the fight has already begun. This may be, in part, because the audience is by definition already established. Michel could not get back in so he broke the glass window of the door and then the fight continued.

Without the teacher's information, it would seem that perhaps there was no outside intervention before the resolution of this event. But we know that for several days Helena and Michel were separated and told explicitly not to speak to one another. And finally, they were warned that no "foolishness" would be tolerated. This intervention by the teacher is verbal and without respect.

While explaining that Michel grabbed for her chest, Helena also described "everybody looking..That's what got me really offended." They had an audience. In this conflict event the combination of an intervention without respect and an audience led to a physical fight.

Conflict Event #2: Who you looking at

Description

During a spontaneous group interview, students were talking about the conditions of the school: it's physical appearance, safety, and quality of teaching. I asked them how long they each had been attending WHHS. After each one answered, the conversation continued:

Shawon: When I came here I never
Lorelle: The first time I came here, I liked it a little bit.
Shawon: Yeah, I did too.
Lorelle: Nobody bothered you. And then the second year it got bad.
Shawon: [inaudible]
Lorelle: It got bad.
Shawon: When you start moving up that's when they start acting up
Lorelle: Umhmm.
Shawon: Even the freshmen when they come here from like 123 and all those schools.
Lorelle: Yeah.
Shawon: They be wild
Lorelle: There was this one time I was on the staircase and this girl, this young girl, she says who you looking at? I say who you talking to?
Beth: Them freshmen right?
Lorelle: I said you're a little girl. I said to me beating you up they will take me down there and blame me for hitting you
Shawon: Yup. That's how it is.
Lorelle: Then this guy comes by and looks at me. He

looks at me and he says 'you ain't scared of that little girl are you?' I wasn't scared but I didn't want to fight, know what I mean?
Beth: Yeah.
Lorelle: and such a little girl and she's looking rolling her eyes and doing all of this other stuff. Acting tough like and then everybody's there, watching and everything.
Shawon: So you fought her, right?
Lorelle: Shit, yes. I mean I had to.
Beth: Uh huh.
[10/26/87; interview: open-ended, unscheduled, audio-taped]

Analysis

peer (stranger)/ verbal / without respect
---> FIGHT
audience

As Lorelle describes it, she was walking up the stairs when a freshmen stopped her and challenged her ("Who you looking at?"). Lorelle reported the beginning of verbal bantering and described that she was trying to avoid a fight. She didn't want to get into trouble and she knew she would be blamed for it. She was trying to keep her record clean.

The intervention happened when another student walked by and challenged Lorelle once again ("You're not afraid are you.") As a result, she felt that she could not avoid the fight and "keep face."

In addition, the second condition for a fight to take place in school is also met. There was an audience ("and then everybody's there, watching and everything").

The resolution: a fight. Given the pattern being presented here, a physical fight could have been predicted. In fact, Shawon's reaction indicates that she too understands that there was no choice but to fight ("So you fought her, right?"). And Lorelle replies, "Shit yeah, I mean I had to."

Implications for Conflict Mediation Programs: Project S.M.A.R.T.

Wilson Hill High School was one of several schools with a comprehensive conflict mediation program called Project S.M.A.R.T. (School Mediators' Alternative Resolution Team). Project S.M.A.R.T. is designed to help students, teachers and families resolve disputes and disagreements through mediation. Project S.M.A.R.T. was brought to WHHS in response to the increasing number of fights in the school, as measured by the number of suspensions.

> In mediation, people involved in a dispute are helped to resolve their differences through discussion and compromise. This is done with the help of a mediator. Each party has a chance to explain the events leading up to the dispute without interruption. The mediator will then help both parties identify and discuss the issues involved in the dispute. The mediators do not judge guilt or innocence, take sides, or tell the disputants what to do. Instead, the mediators help the disputants communicate with one another in a productive way and arrive at a solution that best suits the needs of each disputant (Project S.M.A.R.T., 1989).

One room near the cafeteria is designated as the mediation room. Students who were trained mediators spend most of the free time - as well as some "cutting time" - in this room. It was a meaningful place for students; a place in which they felt a part.[4] Frequent participant observation in this room convinced me to take part in a mediation training workshop at WHHS (Appendix C). From discussions with students, observations and participation in the training, it was evident that conflict mediation explicitly focuses on those individuals involved in the conflict. Mediators are trained to help their fellow students resolve their dispute.

In fact, the number of fighting incidents decreased during the time that Project S.M.A.R.T. was in operation at WHHS. Fighting also decreased in all the other schools in the larger evaluation sample which had a similar program (Grannis, et al. 1988). Assuming the reduction is in part a result of Project S.M.A.R.T., one might question the validity of the findings of this study. If a program which focuses specifically on mediating between the two individuals involved in the conflict event manages to be successful perhaps the role of intervention and audience are not significant. There is another explanation, however. By teaching several students the necessary skills to be mediators in an artificial setting such as the conflict mediation sessions, it is possible that students are also learning ways to intervene in conflict events as they arise more spontaneously. In other words, the conflict mediation program is changing the role the students play in the interactions involved in a conflict event. They are able to intervene with respect and, as a result, fewer fights are reported in the school.

In one sense, Project S.M.A.R.T. empowers students by allowing them to share the responsibility for the social interactions in schools. In another sense, it continues to blame the victim. Despite its positive results, one can view this program as another way of blaming the students. During the training there was no mention of other factors which might contribute to a fight. Students are seen as solely responsible and, therefore, are the focus of mediation. It is assumed that by training students how to mediate conflict, there will be less fights in school. It in no way addresses the larger context of conflict events. There is no discussion, for example, of how conflict events and fighting may be a form of resistance. There is no discussion of the roles played by interveners and audience. And so the blame may remain, however unintentionally, with the students.

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[4] For a more in-depth description and analysis of the relevance of this projct, see Gerics and Westheimer (1989)

Still, the fact remains that Project S.M.A.R.T. was one of the most influential programs within the larger dropout prevention initiative referred to earlier. It provided meaningful activity for students in an otherwise meaningless curriculum. It seems to have given students a sense of control over their own environment and, perhaps, it allowed them to change their participator roles in a conflict event. These are all very significant changes and worthy of further study, particularly in relation to the general field of dropout prevention.

Conclusion

By changing one's focus from the characteristics of an individual to the necessary social interactions and meanings which structure those interactions, this study has presented another way of examining the serious dilemma faced by many of urban high schools - violence. Typically, the effectiveness of implemented programs to deter such violence is measured by the number of fighting incidents or the number of school suspensions for fighting. These findings suggest that such measures may not be complete indicators of success. We may need to find ways to examine the types of interventions that take place in the lives of students in our schools. For example, conflict mediation programs should be examined to determine what effect they have on the roles played by those involved in conflict events. The important role audience plays in school violence also needs to be addressed in these days of severely over-crowed schools.

This is by no means meant to suggest that the discovery of this pattern of social interaction labeled a conflict event will solve the problem. But it does offer an alternative view, a view which takes the focus - and the blame - away from the individual and places it with the the social interactions that take place within the larger social structure of the setting.

As I have tried to demonstrate, many pieces have to be in place in order for a fight to take place. A fight is one moment in a complex, highly variable conflict event. A deeper understanding of this event might lead to a deeper understanding of the nature of violence in our schools and then, hopefully, to a change in the focus and nature of current discussion and policy-making. Such a change must turn our attention away from examining and, therefore, trying to change the individual, to examining and, thereby, changing the social institutions.

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

HIGH SCHOOL REPORTING OF SERVICES TO STUDENTS IN 1987-88: THE HIGH SCHOOL LOG

Kenneth E. Jewell

Development of the High School Log

The high school log was first used in the Dropout Prevention Program's second year (1986-87) to try to capture the extent to which program services reached students. Service providers - school and CBO personnel working in the program - were asked to keep a record of their contacts with all students, whether targeted or not, for three two-week periods in December 1986, March 1987 and May 1987.

The 1986-87 log covered all areas of the program - facilitation, attendance outreach, guidance and counseling, health services, school level linkages, security and alternative education - on a single form. In consultation with school and CBO service providers, and with reference to our own on-site observations, a list of activities was compiled for each of these areas. The list included, for example, individual and peer counseling under guidance and counseling, home visits under attendance outreach, and special academic classes under alternative education. Each activity was considered a student contact, and students' names and four-digit identity codes were entered on the log each time they took part in any program activity. We also sought information about who had initiated the contact, where it took place and its duration.

Maintaining these logs proved to be very burdensome for service providers, in part because on the single form the areas of service provision could not be clearly delineated, and in part because the name and four-digit code of every student with whom a service provider had contact - in some cases numbering more than two hundred students in a single reporting period - had to be entered on the log.

With these factors in mind we designed a new log for the 1987-88 school year, comprising a separate form for each of the areas, or components, of the program, as listed in paragraph 2, above. Figure 11-1 shows a copy of the form for guidance and counseling. As in the previous year, we consulted with school and CBO personnel in determining which activities should be listed on each form; in some cases the same activity, undertaken by service providers in different components, was listed on several forms. Attendance outreach is one such case, being an activity undertaken by attendance outreach staff and by guidance personnel. In further discussion with individual service providers, school principals and, in some cases, with whole schools teams, we determined which form was most appropriate for each service provider. We again asked those completing the forms to indicate who initiated contacts and their duration.

We made three other substantial changes to this part of our data collection: we restricted to six the number of schools from whom we sought reporting, we restricted that reporting to forty students in each school, and we asked service providers to keep weekly records throughout the whole year. We hoped that by using a limited number of schools we should be able to provide better back-up services in enabling them to maintain the logs. Restricting the number of students enabled us to write their names and identification codes on the logs and lessened considerably the burden of reporting, and this compensated in turn for the fact that we requested weekly reports for the duration of the school year.

Service providers were asked to check the names of listed students seen during the week. Where appropriate they were asked to indicate the focus of the contact, by whom it was initiated and its duration. Where several contacts with one student were made, several foci could be checked. Where there were no contacts with any of the listed students service providers were asked to submit blank forms.

Service Providers

As in the previous year, service providers were defined as those school and CBO personnel who were paid from or provided by program funds, and who had direct or indirect contact with students. 'Indirect' contacts included telephone calls or mail to students' homes.

Selection of Schools

In connection with other aspects of our third year evaluation it was decided that we should institute the logs in only six of the program schools. Schools 2, 3, 5, 6, 10 and 12 were selected because we were undertaking other evaluations in them - of the jobs program in Schools 6, 10 and 12, for example, and a longitudinal study in Schools 3, 5, 6 and 12. It was clear that the logs would inform the findings from these other studies, and vice versa. In addition, we sought to maintain a balance in program models, in geographical location and in program size as measured by the number of service providers. This group of six schools represented all four models and the four boroughs in which the program was in place, and comprised school programs ranging in size from fourteen to fifty service providers.

Selection of Students

Each group of forty students consisted of four randomly selected from the longitudinal study (in the schools where that study was taking place), four randomly selected by us from a group of nine or ten students identified by the schools and CBOs as some with whom they felt they were having particular success, and the remainder randomly selected by us from each school's target list. In five of the schools the target list contained the names of all students with whom either school staff or CBO staff were working or were preparing to work. The sixth school felt that a target list was inappropriate to its systemic approach and we instead drew our random sample from the whole school roster, selecting proportionately from the school's various academic and social groupings.

Implementation

We could not identify students until the schools produced their target lists. We could not finalise our selection of schools until we had ascertained that the students we wished to follow in our longitudinal study were indeed attending the schools indicated by our records. It was only in the beginning of November, therefore, that we began our consultations. Although four of the schools were alerted to our requests by the end of that month, and the other two in early January, only one school began to maintain logs before the Christmas break. This meant that we had to ask service providers to refer to their records in order to get reporting for the first quarter of the year. Generally speaking, the schools were receptive to our requests, a point that is borne out by the high level of reporting for that period.

Analysis of the Logs

Interpreting the data

Last year we discussed the problems associated with this kind of reporting, and, undoubtedly many of those problems remain. We cannot avoid, for example, the fact that some activities are more easily recorded than others, nor can we circumvent the possibility that contacts might be concentrated upon those students who are identified on the logs. We cannot be sure that every contact was recorded and it proved impossible to get a record of the occasions when service providers tried to make contact with students but were unable to do so, or of when students tried unseccessfully to make contact with service providers, because the demands of keeping track of such events would have been too great. An additional problem this year stemmed from our late start. While some service providers regularly keep records to which they can refer - guidance counselors are required to keep detailed records of their contacts with students - others such as attendance outreach personnel might have had to rely upon less substantial material. It is necessary to remember, therefore, that the services defined by the logs are based on those activities which were recorded and that they do not necessarily describe every program contact made during the year.

Staffing of Components

The manner in which schools staffed their programs indicated their emphases. In determining who should use which logs, we derived a list of service providers for each of the schools. Every school provided more staff in guidance and counseling than in any other component but the proportion ranged from 76% in School 5 to 40% in School 2. Only in isolated cases did other components receive significant staffing - 30% for attendance outreach in Schools 6 and 10, and 26% for alternative education in School 12. It should be noted, however, that some components needed fewer staff members - Health is a good example. Overall, School 1 was alone in providing staff for all components; no staffing provision was made for alternative education in School 10, for linkage in Schools 2 and 3, and for security in Schools 2, 6, 10 and 12. Table 11-1 shows the number of service providers and the components in which they worked in each school's program.

Service Provider Reporting

The percentage of service providers who returned logs for all or part of the year varied widely across the schools, as Table 11-2 shows. Four schools maintained levels at or above 73%, one was at 53% and one at 25%. In this last school, School 2, only four people returned logs and they were all CBO staff. It was reasonable to suppose that such reporting provided only a partial and unbalanced view of that school's whole program and it was decided that the school should be omitted from our analyses. Further discussion, therefore, entails Schools 3, 5, 6, 10 and 12 only.

In order for us to obtain a reasonable picture of the overall program in each of these five schools it was important that we receive logs for all of the components which were originally staffed - as discussed above. That was the case in Schools 3 and 6, but in Schools 5 and 12 no Linkage logs were received, and in School 10 no Health logs were received. In most of the other components, however, at least two-thirds of the service providers responded. It should be borne in mind that some service providers might have been unable to make contact with the selected students, and it should be noted that while the number of service providers who reported was high, not all reported every week - quite possibly, again, because they did not see any of the selected students during that period.

Overall, the returns are such that we can be fairly confident that the logs reflect the activities of the programs in each of the five schools remaining in our analysis.

Contacts by Schools

We use the word 'contact' to indicate that a student was reported to have been involved one or more times with a specific staff member in a given program activity during the week in question. Where the activities occurred under different program components they were reported by different service providers on different logs, and can, therefore, be individually identified. Contacts cannot be distinguished one from another where a student had several contacts with the same service provider during a week. To obtain that information it would have been necessary to have service providers maintain a daily log or one for even shorter periods, and clearly that would have been extremely burdensome and probably unproductive.

Table 11-3 shows contacts for each component as a percentage of each school's program. The total number of contacts reported ranged from 1481 in School 3 to 313 in School 12, figures which are equivalent, respectively, to averages of 37 and 8 contacts per student for the whole school year. Guidance and Counseling predominated in four of the schools, being 80.8% of the program in School 12, 75.7% in School 5, 59.5% in School 3 and 37.9% in School 6, reflecting, except for School 12, the staffing ratios discussed earlier. In School 10, however, Attendance Outreach comprised 72.1% of services, and Guidance and Counseling 15.7%. Again as the staffing figures indicated, Attendance Outreach and Guidance and Counseling together accounted for nearly 82% of all reported contacts.

We have to bear in mind in this and subsequent analyses that in School 6 we varied our sampling strategy to the extent that we met the School's request that we should sample from the whole school roster rather than from what would have been a much smaller target group as used in the other schools. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that program contacts to the whole student body would have been more thinly spread, and this seems to be borne out by these and later figures.

Student Contacts

The number of contacts reported for individual students ranged from 147 in one instance through an overall mean of 27.7 to a low of 0, eight students in one school having no recorded program contacts. The median number of contacts in the schools were 29.5, 33.5, 28, 2 and 10.5. The quartile deviations were, in the same order, 23, 8.5, 14.5, 5 and 7. (The wider the quartile deviation, the greater the spread of the scores). It is worth noting that over half of the targeted students received less than 28 contacts during the course of one year - that is less than one a week.

These figures suggest that the program is thinly and unevenly spread, and support a comment made in our report for 1986-87 which questioned whether services were sufficiently comprehensive for individual students. While there is no doubt that students have to be in school to receive most of the services which are offered - though not mail and telephone calls - the picture which emerges suggests that even when they are present the supports offered to many of them may well be inadequate.

Table 11-4 shows the number of components under which students in each school received services. Again, the range of services offered to students, as measured by the number of different components under which they had contacts, is wide. No ' school recorded services in all seven components. In Schools 5 and 6 students were offered services in everything except security, but only four students received services in all six components. In Schools 3 and 12, both of which recorded services in five components, no student received services in more than four of them, and in School 10, where services were recorded in four components, no student received services in more than three of them. In the five schools only 40 students received services in more than three components. This again suggests that the program is narrower in scope than is perhaps desirable.

Table 11-5 shows the number of students who received facilitation, attendance, guidance, health, alternative education, linkage and security services respectively. As might be expected, figures for Guidance and Counseling were high, with from 26 to 38 students in individual schools and 160 of the 200 selected students (80%) receiving such services. Attendance Outreach was common in three schools with 33 or more students receiving some form of contact in each of them, and in School 10, where this component accounted for 65% of all services, and where every student was listed as having had some outreach. Two-thirds (67.5%) of students overall received services under this component. The number of students who received either Attendance Outreach or Guidance and Counseling services is high. The average number of contacts with those students throughout the year - 12.8 Attendance contacts and 16.6 Guidance contacts - was somewhat less than one every two school weeks. Whether this is an appropriate level of contact or whether it is weak depends partly on the levels of other services offered. Only two schools reported contacts under the Health component and only one of them reported fulfilling the requirement that all students should receive a health care check during the year. Figures for other components were similarly low.

Attendance Outreach and Guidance Activities

As we have noted earlier, Attendance Outreach and Guidance and Counseling reported by far the greatest number of contacts and we look now at a breakdown of the activities under each of those components.

Attendance Outreach

Table 11-6 shows the activities reported under Attendance Outreach and the proportion of the component devoted to them. All schools reported student conferences, home visits, and telephone calls and mail contacts, activities which accounted for fully 98% of the attendance outreach program. Most of the contacts reported in Schools 5 and 10 were by telephone call or mail - over 60% in each case. Additionally, School 10 devoted 12.8% of its activities to home visits, reflecting an active attendance outreach program. In School 3 student conferences comprised just over 52% of the activities and telephone calls and mail 43%; in School 6 student conferences also took up 52% of all activities, followed by telephone calls and mail at 25%. Finally, in School 12 the emphasis was on student and parent conferences (52%) and telephone and mail (19.8%). The seeming preponderance of telephone calls and mail in Schools 5 and 10 may be attributable, in part, to the ease with which such contacts can be made and recorded. Phone calls are frequently automated and a record is kept of all calls attempted and successful - in the sense that the phone is answered. Mail contacts, similarly, are often by means of preprinted letters which are, again quick and easy to use and to record. To transfer on to the log information about these contacts is certainly a lot easier than recording, for example, a student conference. That aside, phone calls and mail are not direct contacts - the sending of a letter does not mean that it is received by the addressee nor is an automated message necessarily heard by the person for whom it was intended. That is not to say, however, that these indirect contacts are valueless and the O.R.E.A. has suggested that all A.I.D.P. schools should be equipped with such facilities. We see here, then, two quite distinct approaches to attendance outreach.

Guidance and Counseling

As can be seen on the Guidance and Counseling Log sample in Figure 11-1, the variety of activities under this component is very broad, ranging from individual and group counseling to careers trips and vocational assessment. The number of times on which schools undertook activities in this component is shown in Table 11-7. All schools reported individual, group, family or peer counseling activities, which accounted for from 59.9% to 25.3%. of their guidance and counseling programs. Individual counseling was the most frequent activity in four of the schools, and accounted for 39.7% of all reported activities, while attendance outreach by guidance counselors was the most frequent in the fifth school. Group counseling and grade advisement were other frequently reported activities. Of the remainder, only career education, career trips and vocational assessment were undertaken in all five schools, but the group of career related activities, which also included skills training and educational internships, accounted for 13.3% of all guidance and counseling activities.

Student Initiated Contacts

In order to be able to obtain information about the way in which students responded to the program, we asked service providers to indicate on the log the person who initiated each contact - student, students' family members, or staff. Over half (55.6%) of the logs contained this information, and of that number, 29.1% (862 contacts) were student-initiated, 5.1% were family-initiated and 65.8% were staff-initiated. Just over one-third of all contacts for which we have this information, therefore, were initiated by the students or the students' families.

The schools differed both in the extent of their reporting and in the proportions attributed to each initiator, as can be seen in Table 11-8. In School 3, 84% of contacts contained the required information and nearly half of them were initiated by students; in School 10, on the other hand, only 13.9% of contacts contained the information, and only 17.2% of those contacts were initiated by students. Just over half of the students on the logs, a total of 105, were reported to have initiated contacts, and 120 'homes' - either students or family members or both - were reported to have done so.

Success Students

As described earlier, four students were randomly selected from a group of nine or ten students identified by each school as some of those with whom they felt they were having particular success. In discussing their programs, we look first at the number of contacts these students received and the number of components under which they were served. We then look at the major focus of the contacts for each student.

In Schools 6 and 10, all four students had a higher than average (for the school) number of contacts and were served under a higher than average number of components. In Schools 3 and 5 the number of students above average on both of those categories were two and three respectively, and in School 12, two were above average in contacts and three above average in components. Generally speaking, therefore, most of this group received a greater than average number of contacts in a wider than average number of components.

The major foci of those contacts varied considerably. In School 3 three students received a lot of individual counseling plus, in one case attendance outreach and in another student conferences and educational internships. The focus for the fourth student was on student conferences. In School 5, two students received group counseling, a third had career trips and the fourth had career education and grade advisement. In School 6 the focus for two students was group counseling and student conferences, for a third it was grade advisement and for the fourth it was alternative education and job placement. In School 10, the focus for two students was upon student conferences and educational trips, for a third it was upon career trips and for the fourth it was on individual counseling. For three of those four students, 40% of all contacts consisted of phone calls and mail. Finally, in School 12, only two of the four students received enough contacts to identify a focus, that being individual conferences and alternative education for one, and career education for the other.

In terms of individualized programs, one anticipates that students would receive the different services they needed and that, therefore, we would not find general patterns emerging. However, we might reason further as follows: the number of contacts received by students with whom the program regards itself to be effective is the minimum level of contact a program needs to maintain; the number of contacts found for more successful students was greater than the number for the remainder of the students; therefore, the number of contacts for students with whom the program deemed itself less successful was lower than the number the students needed. This is consistent with our argument elsewhere that the targeted students needed a broad range of services and that the services recorded were too few to make a difference.

Model Comparisons

As we have already described, the one AIDP model school in the program failed to maintain sufficient logs for these analyses and we are left with three schools in the Modified Systemic model and two in the Modified CBO model.

There are broad differences between the schools in both models and there are no consistencies which could be used to 'describe' either. In the modified systemic schools the proportion of services recorded by CBO staffs varied from 0% to 12%. Figures for the two modified CBO schools were 19.7% and 60.1%. Although the latter figures are, in both cases, higher than the former, the difference between highest systemic and lowest CBO is not great.

As can be seen in Table 11-1, the CBO model schools designated fewer service providers than did their systemic counterparts, but on the other hand, the distribution of staff to components was similar across all the schools, with guidance and counseling being most heavily staffed.

The CBO schools reported the highest (1481) and the lowest (313) number of contacts, but the distribution of those contacts among the seven components, as shown in Table 11-3, was different for each of the schools and showed no model consistency.

Receipt of services by students showed model differences in the number of components under which they were served but not in the number of students who received services under each component. In the former category, students in CBO model schools received services in up to 3 or 4 components; systemic model students received services in up to 6 components in two cases, and in 2 or 3 in the third. In the latter category, one CBO school recorded the highest number of students receiving guidance services while the other recorded the lowest, and there are similar model inconsistencies in all components. Tables 11-4 and 11-5 show receipt of services.

As a last measure of model comparison, we look at the breakdown of services in the two largest 'service areas', Attendance Outreach and Guidance and Counseling, shown in Tables 11-6 and 11-7.

In Attendance Outreach, the CBO model schools compare with one of the systemic schools, all three stressing conferences (student or parent) and indirect contacts (telephone and mail), whereas the other two systemic model schools focused on indirect contacts. In Guidance and Counseling no discernable pattern exists, with the exception that the major activity in all schools was individual counseling.

The logs reinforce those aspects of the evaluation's earlier studies that emphasize there being greater differences among the schools within models than differences between models. The greatest promise of the logs lies in the use they would have in school-based planning, to plan and monitor the distribution of services to students. We are currently exploring the relationship between services recorded, particularly in guidance and counseling, and student outcomes. However, in this case too, meaningful relationships are most likely to be found at the individual school level, as feedback from the logs is used to close the gap between program goals and observations for students.

Table 11-1

Number of Service Providers per Component per School

Component: School	F	AO	GC	H	AE	L	S	TOT
2	1	5	8	1	5	0	0	20
3	2	1	8	0	4	0	1	16
5	3	2	35	1	5	1	1	48
6	2	8	13	2	1	1	0	27
10	3	7	9	1	0	1	0	21
12	1	2	6	1	4	1	0	15

Table 11-2

Number of Service Providers Returning Logs

Component: School	F	AO	GC	H	AE	SL	S	TOT	%
2	0*	0*	4	0*	0*	0	0	4	25
3	1	1	7	0	2	0	1	12	75
5	2	1	26	1	4	0*	1	35	73
6	2	6	10	2	1	1	0	22	81
10	3	6	6	0*	0	1	0	16	76
12	1	1	4	1	1	0*	0	8	53

* Indicates no logs received in components originally staffed.

Table 11-3

Contacts per Component Per School

Component:	F	AO	GC	H	AE	SL	S
School	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
3	5.5	25.1	59.6	0	1.6	0	8.2
5	9.3	9.2	75.7	2.5	2.6	0	0.7
6	12.7	15.3	37.9	14.0	9.5	10.8	0
10	12.0	72.1	15.7	0	0	0.2	0
12	2.9	6.1	80.8	0	10.2	0	0

Table 11-4

Number of Students Receiving Services in Different Numbers of Components

# Compnts:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOT
School									
3	0	3	15	10	12	0	0	0	40
5	0	1	10	12	14	2	1	0	40
6	0	1	15	13	4	4	3	0	40
10	0	0	14	26	0	0	0	0	40
12	8	17	10	5	0	0	0	0	40
	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	
	8	22	64	66	30	6	4	0	

Table 11-5

Number of Students Receiving Services by Components

Component:	F	AO	GC	H	AE	LK	S
School							
3	19	33	38	9	0	0	12
5	27	34	35	21	2	0	10
6	7	14	28	40	12	23	0
10	30	40	33	0	0	3	0
12	5	14	26	0	7	0	0
	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
	88	135	160	70	21	26	22

Table 11-6

% of Activities under Attendance Outreach

	School				
	3	5	6	10	12
Activity					
Referal	0	13.8	0	0	0
Student Conf.	52.5	10.1	52.7	6.5	26.1
Parent Conf.	0.2	8.0	2.7	1.8	26.1
Staff Conf.	0	4.0	0	0.3	0
Home Visit	4.2	1.6	15.5	12.8	21.7
Phone	28.1	28.2	8.2	69.6	10.9
Mail	15.0	33.0	17.3	9.0	8.7
Awards Assbly	0	0	0.9	0	6.5
Incentives	0	1.1	2.7	0	0

Table 11-7

% Activities under Guidance and Counseling

	School				
Activity	3	5	6	10	12
Individual Counseling	56.7	32.7	35.0	29.7	35.0
Group Counseling	13.3	12.9	20.3	5.1	5.9
Family Counseling	1.1	3.4	1.6	5.6	0
Peer Counseling	0.2	0.9	3.9	0.5	0
Grade Advisement	5.0	12.2	21.7	9.7	0
Referal	0.9	5.1	2.8	4.6	0
Educ. Internship	11.9	0.4	0	0	1.9
Skills Training	0.6	1.5	0.3	0	0.6
Careers Education	0.6	5.9	3.6	8.6	5.9
Careers Trip	2.7	2.6	1.6	0.5	0.9
Vocational Assessment	0.9	1.0	2.2	5.9	7.1
Attendance Outreach	4.4	19.3	2.5	24.2	42.7
Family Life Work	0	0.2	0.3	0.3	0
Mentoring	1.6	1.6	0.6	3.2	0
Conflict Mediation	0.1	0.3	3.6	2.1	0

N.B. Although other activities were listed on the log, none of them was reported for any of the selected students.

Table 11-8

Student, Family and Staff Initiated Contacts

	Student		Family		Staff		Total	
School	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
3	554	(44.7)*	57	(4.6)	628	(50.7)	1239	(83.6)**
5	152	(17.0)	44	(4.9)	700	(78.1)	896	(64.7)
6	94	(28.1)	34	(10.2)	206	(61.7)	334	(48.7)
10	35	(13.9)	10	(4.0)	207	(82.1)	252	(17.2)
12	27	(11.1)	6	(2.5)	209	(86.3)	242	(77.3)
	862	(29.1)	151	(5.1)	1950	(65.8)	2963	(55.6)

* Percentages under Student, Family and School are based on the number of contacts for which information was given.

** Percentages under Total are based on the total of all contacts.

FIGURE 11.1
DROPOUT PREVENTION PROGRAM - SERVICE DELIVERY LOG

________ HIGH SCHOOL

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

STAFF NAME____________________

WEEK #__________

DATES____________

#	Individual Counselling	Group Counselling	Family Counselling	Peer Counselling	Grade Advisement	Career Education/Orientation	Career Trip or Activity	Vocational Assessment	Conflict Mediation	Mentoring	Referral	Family Life Theater Workshop	Attendance Outreach	Educational Internship	Skills Training		Initiated by Student?	Initiated by Parent?	Initiated by Staff?	Brief or informal?

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Relationship of Ego Identity and Racial Identity among Black Students

Diana Stewart

Abstract

An initiative to prevent the drop out phenomenon should at some point include an understanding of the problem - an understanding of the obstacles that may prevent students from pursuing their life dreams. Much of the Drop Prevention Initiative (DPI) programs however are focused at rehabilitation and prevention without a clear understanding of the problem. In response, this study was designed to be a preliminary attempt at understanding the etiology of the dropout phenomenon.

As one begins to examine this problem among those students included in the DPI programs, a discrepancy becomes immediately apparent. The academic performance of many DPI students is not concurrent with their stated goals and aspirations. As a whole, students identified as at-risk of dropping out of school are able to clearly identify career and or vocational objectives for the years after graduation. In addition, only 9% of those students surveyed in Spring 1987 reported that they would not expect to complete high school. Despite their motivation however, these very students do in fact drop out of school. This pattern of abandoning dreams and failing to achieve objectives occurs at an alarming rate which suggests more than innate inability or deficiency on the part of individual students.

In an effort to understand this phenomenon, the present study takes a closer look at the students as a whole - a largely non-white adolescent population - and suggests related theories that may help to understand the dynamics described. Developmentally, these students are at a point where thoughts of the future are salient. Erikson's theory (1968) proposes that adolescence marks the start of a life long process of ego identity development. The adolescent works towards a balance between self and the society in which they exist. The successful resolution of this task is evidenced by the translation of their self image into a career and or occupation. While attempting to pursue this task which includes understanding self-image as well as the image of oneself that one perceives others as holding, this largely non-white population of students is surrounded by white adult role models in position of authority.

The relationship between culture, race and career development has been documented in the literature (MacDavis Parker, 1981; Semmes, 1985). These studies describe how the non-white student in a white society must consistently address the problem of legitimacy - being recognized and respected. Given the demographics of the high school population, it would be remiss to exclude some examination of racial attitudes and their relationship to the adolescents task of exploration of a meaningful role in society. Using the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status, (OMEIS, Adams et al., 1979), which operationalizes Erikson's theory of ego development as well as the Racial Attitude Inventory Scale, (RAIS, Carter and Helms, 1985), and the Minority Identity Development Scale, (MID, Atkinson, Morten & Sue, 1979), which operationalize theories of racial identity development, this study attempts to understand the relationship between these two constructs within the at-risk population of DPI high school, towards a greater goal of understanding the dropping behavior that is observed.

In an attempt to understand how a relationship between ego development and racial identity development may relate to success and failure in school, the respective scales were administered to a sample of honor students, identified as succeeding in school, as well as a sample of at-risk students, identified as not succeeding.

The results of the study reveal patterns which suggest that some relationship exists between racial identity, ego identity and achievement. Generally speaking those students who were performing better than their peers, the honor students, appeared to be a more homogeneous group in terms of racial identity attitudes and ego identity development. These results might seem to suggest that honor students are able to succeed because of a balance achieved between their ego identity development and their racial identity attitudes. What remains unclear is the direction of the relationship. Specifically, are students able to succeed in school because of this balance, or is one result of their academic performance the opportunity for exposure to situations which encourage the development of their ego identity and racial identity development.

The patterns observed speak to the necessity for further study and suggest some recommendations for program implementation. A general recommendation offered is that environments be created with a goal of fostering and developing both ego and racial identity development. The career aspirations of non-white students should be validated and legitimized. In addition a forum for the discussion of racial identity attitudes should be provided.

In light of the alarming rate at which students are dropping out of school the appropriateness of a Drop Out Prevention Initiative (DPI) is clear. What remains unclear however, is the focus on "rehabilitation" as opposed to understanding the etiology and prevention. Many of the DPI programs and interventions are focused at the level of acceptance - acceptance of students' shortcomings and providing means of adaptation. There is little attempt to understand what obstacles are preventing students from pursuing their life dreams. In response, this study is a first attempt at understanding the underlying dynamics of the drop out phenomenon.

During adolescence, students begins to think about their future and they begin to work towards their goals. In a life long process of ego identity achievement, where one strives for a balance between ones self and the society in which one exists, Erikson (1968) identifies the major developmental task for the adolescent to be that of integration. He defines integration to be the formation of a strong personal identity which includes a stable congruence between self-image and the image of oneself that one perceives others as holding. The successful resolution of this task is evidenced by the translation of ones role into a career and or occupation within society. For the adolescent who has managed to positively resolve this crisis it is suspected that school would be viewed as a viable option, leading to an outcome - a career. This process of development is not always smooth. Erikson also talks about a dropping out behavior among those adolescents who meet resistance and who experience the environment as forcing upon them forms of expression which do not permit them to develop and integrate their ego identity.

It has been observed that high school students identified as at-risk of dropping out of school are cognitively engaged in the task of translating their sense of self into a role within society. They are able to clearly identify career and or vocational objectives for the years after graduation. In the Spring 1987 DPI survey of high schools students, (Grannis et al., 1988), 50% reported desires for college, business or trade school after graduation. Of this population, an even larger 63% reported the expectation of obtaining some further schooling beyond high school. Only 9% reported that they would fail to complete high school. Although in the abstract these statistics would appear to describe a goal oriented and motivated student population, in the context of the school environment, a discrepancy is observed: the academic performance of these students is not concurrent with their stated goals and aspirations. The reality may be that they are engaged in the dropping out behavior that Erikson describes. Despite their motivation for success these very students are at a great risk of dropping out of high school. This discrepancy is not an anomaly of the NYC high schools. In a longitudinal study of a similar population in the mid-west, Grant and Sleeter (1988) observed a similar discrepancy. In their sample students expressed optimism about finishing school, further education and achieving personal satisfaction - in the end they abandoned their dreams and failed to achieve their objectives.

In addition to their expressed goals and objectives, the at-risk population is one that feels good about themselves. Students in the DPI high schools are generally not depressed. In the same survey 89% reported that they had many good qualities. Only 27% of the students reported feeling they did not have much to be proud of. Sixty-five percent of the sample disagreed with the statement that at times they are no good at all, 35% agreed. Eighty-seven percent reported feeling good about their race or ethnic group. As educators seeking to address the epidemic proportion of students who drop out of school, we must wonder at the discrepancy described. On a regular basis students who reported feeling good about themselves and their abilities to succeed and who are able to describe future goals for themselves, are somehow failing to succeed.

It is suggested that attention be focused at the level of interpersonal interactions. To witness such a large number of students falling prey to the same dynamics suggests more than innate inability or deficiency on the part of the student.

Grant and Sleeter (1988) suggest that students' success is somehow related to the interaction between the student and the world in which they live of which school is a part. If we examine the world of school for those students enrolled in DPI high schools we observe a largely non-white student population in contrast with a largely white staff of teachers and administrators. The racial/ethnic breakdown of high school students in the 1987 DPI survey was: 44% Afro-American/Black, 39% Hispanic/Spanish, 4% Asian, 4% Caucasian. Although statistics were not available for school personnel, observation reveals that the numbers are not similar. The greatest percentage of non-white staff are security guards and custodial staff. Thinking at the level of interpersonal interactions, one cannot help but wonder how these demographics influence students' success or failure in school. What effect does a largely white staff have upon the student who aspires for college and beyond?

Despite the racial divergence, we can not simply conclude that overt racism or discrimination is the intervening variable. A great percentage of the students report a strong bond with their teachers and a feeling of being supported by their teachers. Eighty percent report that teachers treat students with respect, 81% report that teachers cared about students at least some of the time, 51% report they liked their principal fairly much, 83% reported that teachers really listened to what they had to say sometimes or almost always. However neither can we pass over these demographics so quickly. If students have aspirations and desires to achieve and they feel supported by their teachers, how do we explain the difficulty they experience in translating their goals into behaviors? Perhaps race is precisely the variable to be considered on a personal level.

Erikson (1963) highlighted the balance and conflict that exists between the Black Afro-American adolescent's identification with the dominant race versus the need of the dominant race to protect itself, elaborating that opportunities for Blacks were restricted by historical identities (slavery), stereotyping and discrimination. As a result it is sometimes difficult for the non-white adolescent to translate their sense of self into a societal role when the image society holds is different from the image they hold for themselves. Fairchild (1985) reports a long history of research which documents the fact that society's attitude toward a particular racial group is in part a function of the labels associated with that group. It is striking that in New York City schools the non-white students are still referred to as "minorities" despite the fact that they comprise the majority of the student population. In addition the very persons who they regard as positive and hold as role models, their teachers, are persons who are largely of a different racial and ethnic group - the majority. What effect does identifying with a group that is held in higher esteem than oneself have upon ones success or failure? It is suggested that the racial demographics within these schools covertly impact students' success and failure.

In 1975 Massey, Scott, Dornbusch observed that covert racism did exist in classrooms where teachers' warmth and support of their non-white students was accompanied by an absence of challenging standards. Teachers appeared to accept their students' poor performance and were "nice" to them. It is possible that the same dynamic exists in DPI schools where labels may convey a status of being less than equal, despite the warmth experienced on the part of teachers. More extensive classroom observation would address this question. Massey et al. also reported that the educational aspirations of Black Afro-American students equalled that of their white counterparts. However what differed were the expectations for success. They did not expect to succeed. They also perceived their teachers as more friendly and warm than did their white and Asian counterparts despite their poor school performance. The authors suggest that on some level, the Black Afro-American students had accepted the negative concept and lower aspirations society held for their group as a whole. The lower expectations were realistically reflecting social conditions. Spencer (1982) also discusses the impact of race on school performance. She suggests that the Afro-American child who holds a negative attitude about their race as a whole supported by society, may indeed maintain a positive self concept. They hold one attitude about themselves as a member of a race and an additional attitude about their racial group as a whole. She states that the acquisition of a healthy psyche in the non-white child requires an intervention between the communication of society's cultural assumptions at large and the child's own psychological development.

In the light of this research one might hypothesize that the at-risk student enrolled in a DPI high school might have career aspirations but act upon the reality they perceive to be true, that expectations to succeed are not realistic. As they look around themselves and their society there is little hope. The very teachers they admire for the most part are white. They might also gain some message from teachers' lowered expectations both by the demands made of the students as well as by the opportunities offered. Although a student may feel good about themselves and feel hopeful, expressing plans for career and vocational futures, they might meet resistance which would confuse and frustrate them resulting in dropping out behavior. As they attempt to complete the work of adolescence and seek a meaningful role within society, the congruence sought between their own self image and the image society holds for them must be complex for the non-white student - continually a prey of racism. How can an at-risk student who holds white staff as a positive role model obtain an identity in a racist society? This coupled with the reality of unemployment within their communities and discrimination offers little hope of job prospects. This must leave a student confused and stuck in terms of their overall identity.

MacDavis and Parker (1981) and Semmes (1985) discuss the relationship between culture, race and career development. MacDavis and Parker propose a sensitivity to the relationship between ones attitudes about race and culture and ones success in career selection. Semmes highlights "legitimacy" as a central construct involved in the interplay between the two. He defines legitimacy as feelings of being recognized and respected and suggests that it is a critical factor contributing to the conflict between Black communities and mainstream America. The non-white student in a white society must consistently address the problem of legitimacy. What effect does the attitude of non-white students about their race and identification have upon their career selection? Fordham (1988) describes an observed phenomenon which she labels "raceless" behavior which results in Black students minimizing the effects of race on their success as an attempt to circumvent the stigma they perceive to be attached to being a Black Afro-American. She further asserts that despite the growing acceptance of ethnicity and ethnic identification in the larger society, school officials seem to disapprove and are sending contradictory messages that produce conflict and ambivalence in adolescents both toward developing strong racial and ethnic identification and towards performing well in school.

Whether or not one accepts the results of the research presented, it is clear that race has been related to performance in many areas from interpretation of criminal acts (Miller, Miller, Davis, 1983) to political behavior, (Kinder & Scars, 1981). Certainly it should be considered in the educational realm where much of ones socialization first occurs. Given the racial demographics of the high school population, it would be remiss to exclude some examination of race and racial attitudes and how they relate to achievement and particularly to the primary task of adolescence, the exploration and consideration of a meaningful role in society. This study examines the relationship between students' racial identity, (attitudes that one holds about the racial/ethnic group to which one belongs as well as ones place or role within that group), and their ego identity, (formation of a personal identity which includes a stable congruence of self-image and the image of ones self that one perceives others as holding, evidenced by translation of ones self into a career and or occupation within society). The relationship observed between these two constructs within the at-risk population of DPI high schools may help to explain the great percentage of dropping out behavior observed.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study was designed to discover whether a relationship exists between the racial identity attitudes students hold and their ego identity. To that end three instruments, Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (OMEIS, Adams et al., 1979), Racial Attitude Inventory Scale, (RAIS, Carter & Helms, 1985) and Minority Identity Development, (MID, Atkinson, Morten & Sue, 1979), were administered to two different groups of students in one DPI high school. The school was selected on the basis of school personnel's agreement to participate in the study, ethnic representation and the fact that it was a site of other DPI evaluation studies being carried out simultaneously. All students were administered two instruments. Each student completed the OMEIS and either the RAIS, administered to Black Afro-Americans or the MID, administered to non-black ethnic minorities. Both instruments were administered during a 40-minute period. The order of administration of each scale was alternated by student.

Instruments

Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status

The operationalization of ego identity status represented four possible resolutions of the crisis of adolescence, each falling along the continuum of ego identity achievement. Twenty-four (24) items comprise a likert-type scale.

Achievement - commitment to an occupation or ideology following a period of crisis where one has considered options and has made a decision on their own terms;

Moratorium - describes a current crisis where commitments are vague, however there is a real and active attempt to come to some resolution;

Diffusion - describes a lack of commitment. The individual has not made a decision nor are they concerned about making one regarding an occupation or ideology. There may or may not have been a crisis;

Foreclosure - describes a commitment to what parents have chosen or have prepared one to be, not actively seeking an alternative.

Racial Attitude Inventory Scale

The operationalization of racial identity attitudes resulting in four stages of progression from anti-black/pro-white attitudes to a final stage of racial pride, each falling along a continuum of racial identity development. Fifty (50) items comprise a likert-type scale.

Pre-encounter - a world view dominated by Euro-American ideals, resulting in behavior that degrades ones blackness;

Encounter - characterized by a new interpretation of ones identity - there is a "dislodging" from the old world view following the individual's decision to become black;

Immersion-Emersion - characterized by a period of total immersion in ones black culture. This marks an intense period where efforts are directed at shedding the old world view. The level of blackness is high but the degree of internalization is low. The second phase of this stage involves an emergence from initial reactionary attitudes to a more integrated sense of blackness, including the ability to see both positive and negative aspects of other blacks;

Internalization - characterized by the resolution of the conflict between old and new views, anti-white feelings decline and there is a move towards a more pluralistic society, with ones black culture as an anchor.

Minority_Identity_Development

A cultural identity scale which assess five stages of identity achievement along a continuum. Forty-three (43) items comprise a likert-type scale.

Conformity - attitudes of preference for the dominant culture;

Dissonance - attitudes of conflict and confusion as one begins to shed old world views;

Resistance - attitudes of rejection of the dominant society with an immersion into ones own culture;

Introspection - attitudes of conflict regarding immersion into ones own culture. There is a confusion about the responsibility to the minority group and to ones personal identity. There is a questioning of ones rejection of the dominant culture;

Awareness - sense of fulfillment as previous conflicts are resolved.

Subjects

A stratified sample was employed. Students representing two already existing groups were selected. All ninth grade students enrolled in an Honor English class were surveyed, (N=63). They were selected because of their honor status to serve as a comparison against the at-risk population. These students were administered the scales during a single English period. All were present at each administration.

A sample of convenience was employed to survey at-risk students. A list of targeted students enrolled in DPI was generated. The scales were then administered to a gym class in which many targeted and non-targeted at risk students were scheduled (N=50). This method was adopted because of the difficulty of locating at-risk students during the day. Those students who were not present on the day of the administration were surveyed in smaller groups in the DPI office.

Scoring

Ego_Scale

Each item on the ego scale is identified under an identity status: Diffused, Foreclosed, Moratorium and Achieved. All items for each status are summed to provide a raw subscale score for each status. Using Adams' (1979) strategy, individuals scoring one standard deviation above the mean or higher on a given subscale were assigned that identity status, (Pure Score). Subjects scoring one standard deviation above the mean or higher on two subscales were assigned two statuses and viewed as being in transition, (Transition Score). Subjects who scored one standard deviation above the mean or higher on three or more subscales were viewed to be non-discriminating, "ND". Subjects who did not score one standard deviation above the mean on any subscale were viewed as having a low profile, "LP".

Racial/Minority Scales

Items on these scales were identified with a particular stage of racial identity: RAIS - Pre-encounter, Encounter, Immersion-Emersion, Internalization; MID - Conformity, Dissonance, Resistance, Introspection, Awareness. Items for each stage are summed to provide a raw subscale score. Each raw score is then divided by the number of items to yield a final score. Subjects were identified as falling within the stage for which they received the highest score. On this scale as well, in some instances a subject's scores were so close that they are viewed to be in transition between two stages.

RESULTS

113 subjects were included in this analysis. Fifty-six percent were honor students and 44% were non-honor students. For purposes of analysis, subjects were further divided into racial/ethnic groups. Seventy percent of the population sampled were Black Americans (Black) and 30% represented other non-white ethnic minorities (Other) (Table 1). The original sample size was 117. Two Caucasian subjects were dropped from the analysis because of small sample size. Two additional subjects were administered the wrong ethnic identity measure and were also dropped from the analysis.

Ego Scale

The sample population was fairly evenly divided in terms of ego identity statuses. Thirty-one percent obtained a pure ego score and 34% obtained a transition score (Table 2). However a consideration of the subgroups, honor and non-honor, reveals some diversity. Honor students were more likely to fall within a pure ego score (36%) than to be in transition (24%). (Table 2) In contrast, non-honor students were more likely to be in transition, (46%) than not (24%). Five honor subjects did not complete the ego identity scale.

Low Profile Moratorium scores (LP) were observed among both honor and non-honor students. These subjects did not score high enough to be assigned an ego status. For purposes of analysis, LP subjects are often combined with the Moratorium subjects. Researchers have found the pure Moratorium and LP subjects to be very similar in attitudes, values, behaviors and developmental trajectories. They are therefore frequently analyzed together. If we combine Moratorium with LP, the pattern described above still holds. Sixty-two percent of the honor students received a pure score, as compared with 30% of the non-honor students. A somewhat greater percentage of the non-honor students were not discriminating (24%) as compared with the honor students (14%).

The statuses are viewed as a progression from the least advanced, Diffusion, to the most advanced, Achievement. Among the honor subjects, there are more students in the advanced stages, (Achievement - N = 3 and Moratorium - N = 4 or N = 19 if we collapse LP into M), as compared with the non-honors, (Achievement - N = 0 and Moratorium - N = 1 or 4). Both groups had only two subjects scoring in the foreclosed status. (Table 3)

Among the honor students, the largest percentage of pure scores are LP and Moratorium (33%), followed by Diffusion (20%). Among the non-honor subjects, the greatest percentage of scores are the transition score D-M (38%).

Racial Scale

The non-Black ethnic minorities fell into two stages: Dissonance and Awareness. In the non-honor group, all subjects fell within the stage of Awareness. Among honor students, 93% fell within the Awareness stage and 7% within the Dissonance stage. It is suspected that this scale did not discriminate among the subjects, therefore further analysis was not considered. (Table 4)

Among the Black Afro-American subjects, 59% fell within a particular stage of racial identity as compared with 41% who were in transition between stages. Among the honor subjects, 72% fell within a single stage of identity as compared with 28% who were in transition. In contrast, the distribution among non-honor subjects was not that uneven. Virtually the same proportion, 51%, were in transition as compared with 49% who fell within a single identity stage. (Table 5). Those honor students who were in transition fell into one category of transition, Internalization-Encounter. In both groups,the largest number of pure scores were Internalization (Honors = 58%, Non-honors = 37%). One non-honor student fell within the stage of Pre-Encounter.

Outcome Data

The proportion of days present for this sample population was 78% in 1986/87 and increased to 92% in 1987/88. The proportion of courses passed was 66% for 1986/87 and 83% for 1987/88. (Tables 6 & 7).

Breakdowns of these data by subgroups, honor and non-honor, reveal differences. In both years, the proportion of courses passed and the proportion of days present among honor students exceeds that of non-honor students. However students in both groups improved in courses passed and days present over the two year periods.

Overall, without the distinction of honors, non-honors little difference was observed among the racial/ethnic groups in terms of courses passed or proportion of days in attendance.

Comparison - Racial & Ego Scale - Black Subjects

A breakdown of the Black students reveals that honor students are more likely to be committed. Fifty-eight percent received a pure score and fell within one status of ego identity and one stage of racial identity. In contrast, 64% of the non-honor students were in transition on one or both scales. Only 36% fell into a single status or stage of both racial and ego identity. (Table 8) A comparison of the pattern of transition reveals that honor students were more likely to be in transition around racial identity attitudes as compared with the non-honor students who were more likely to be in transition around both racial identity and ego identity.(Table 8)

Only two stages of racial identity were represented among the honor students: Encounter and Internalization. Those who were in transition were moving from a stage of Internalization to Encounter. (The theorists maintain that racial identity development can be circular. Therefore movement from a stage of advanced racial attitudes to a stage of less developed attitudes is possible.) On the ego scale the majority were in a stage of Diffusion or Moratorium. Achievement status was also observed among honor subjects.

The non-honor subjects were more heterogeneous. All four stages of racial identity were represented. Among those in transition on the racial scale, the majority were non-discriminating on the ego scale. All four stages of the racial identity scale were represented.

Using the outcome data as a criterion, non-honor subjects were further divided into two groups. Using the mean as a cut-off, 27 subjects were identified as doing better than their peers in the average percentage of courses passed in year two (1987-88). Among those 27 subjects, 37% percent received pure scores and 63% were in transition. Of particular interest is the observation that like the honor subjects, the majority of subjects within this sub-group (74%) fell within two stages of racial identity - Internalization and Encounter - either as a pure score or as a transition score.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study reveal patterns which suggest that some relationship exists between racial identity, ego identity and achievement. Generally speaking, those students who were performing better than their peers, (honor students), appeared to be a *more homogeneous group in terms of their* racial identity attitudes and their ego identity development. The non-honor students, a more heterogenous group, were more likely to be in transition around racial identity and ego identity development.

The key to success among this population appears to be twofold: One, commitment to either career/occupational ideology or a current identity consciousness where such life alternatives are considered, or noncommitment to a career. Two, an initial step towards embracing ones racial and/or ethnic identity, or a later point which includes resolution of conflict around the issues of racial identity. More Honor students were observed to be within the advanced stages of their ego identity development. They had explored and were currently exploring roles to play within society. In terms of their racial identity attitudes, honor students had fewer conflicts either because they were at a point of initial decision to embrace their culture, or they were at a point of resolution about the conflict between old stereotypes and new world views about their race. The results observed on the racial identity scale seems to speak to the importance of attitudes about race and ethnicity. Only two stages of racial identity were observed among the honor students, Internalization and Encounter. For these students success includes one of two points on the spectrum of racial attitudes.

The picture for those students who were not doing well is less clear. They represented the spectrum of racial identity attitudes which includes attitudes of conflict and anger. They were also more likely to be less developed in terms of their ego identity. Non-honor students were observed to be in transition around racial identity attitudes and non-discriminating in their ego identity development. This somewhat unclear, and varied picture, observed among the non-honor students may be a reflection of the confusion and transition they feel within themselves as they try to succeed in school. Given the results among the honor students, it is suspected that some assistance in resolving the confusion may help non-honor students to succeed. Their state of transition can also be viewed as hopeful. It probably reflects a process of introspection on their part and possibility for change. The assistance described above could therefore be beneficial. An analysis of the non-honor students who were performing better academically, supports this suggestion. The sub-group of non-honor students who were doing better than their peers, appeared more homogeneous and the patterns observed resembled those of the honor students.

These results might seem to suggest that honor students are able to succeed in school because of a balance achieved between their ego identity development - translation of self into a societal role - and their racial identity attitudes. What remains unclear however is the direction of the relationship described. Specifically the question that remains to be addressed is whether the honor students perform better because of the balance described between their ego identity development and their racial identity attitudes. Or whether a result of their academic performance is the opportunity for exposure to situations which encourage the development of their racial and ego identity development.

As a preliminary study, with a small sample in one school, the ability to generalize these results are limited. However the patterns observed do suggest some recommendations and speak to the necessity for further study. Certainly interventions would need to be tailored to fit the special dynamics of each school and its student population. However a general recommendation would be to create environments with a goal of fostering and developing a student's racial and ego identity development. In terms of ego identity development, opportunities for career exploration would provide a forum for more students to begin a process of introspection around ego identity issues and identification of societal roles. In addition the presence of such a forum may help to legitimize any existing internal motivations on the part of students. In terms of racial identity development, the interventions could range from the inclusion of more role models, (eg. non-white teachers and CBO staff) to a re-developed curriculum which includes aspects of cultures other than those of the Caucasian majority. Again the goal would be to validate and legitimize career aspirations of non-white students while providing a forum for the discussion of racial identity attitudes. Curriculum would also help to legitimize varied cultures and provide a springboard for discussion, in and out of the classroom, about racial identity attitudes. Although it is recognized that some of these recommendations are already in place to a varied degree in some schools, (eg. career development component of DPI, non-white CBO staff), this study highlights the necessity for more systematic and extensive interventions across all schools. Recognizing that students will enter at different points of development, the interventions should provide something for everyone. For example, all students may not be ready to engage in discussions about racial identity attitudes, however the presence of role models validates and legitimates ethnic diversity while providing an opportunity for discussion among those students who are ready. In short the goals of any intervention should include the most optimum environment for providing positive messages about ego and racial identity development.

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TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF SUBJECTS BY PROGRAM STATUS AND RACIAL-ETHNIC IDENTITY

	HONOR	NON-HONOR	ALL
BLACK	36 (.57)	43 (.86)	79 (.70)
OTHER	27 (.43)	7 (.14)	34 (.30)
	63	50	

TABLE 2

EGO IDENTITY STATUS

	HONOR	NON-HONOR	ALL
PURE SCORES	21 (.36)	12 (.24)	33 (.30)
TRANSITION	14 (.24)	23 (.46)	37 (.34)
LOW PROFILE (LP)	15 (.26)	3 (.06)	18 (.17)
NON-DISCRIMINATING (ND)	8 (.14)	12 (.24)	20 (.19)
	58	50	

TABLE 3

EGO IDENTITY STATUS

STATUS		HONOR	NON-HONOR	ALL
PURE SCORES				
DIFFUSION	(D)	12	9	21
FORECLOSURE	(F)	2	2	4
MORATORIUM	(M)	4	1	5
ACHIEVEMENT	(A)	3	0	3
		21 (.36)	12 (.24)	33 (.30)
TRANSITION SCORES				
D/A		2	1	3
D/M		8	19	27
D/F		3	2	5
F/M		1	0	1
F/A		0	1	1
		14 (.24)	23 (.46)	37 (.34)
LP		15 (.26)	3 (.06)	18 (.17)
ND		8 (.14)	12 (.24)	20 (.19)
		58	50	

TABLE 4

DISTRIBUTION OF SUBJECTS BY PROGRAM STATUS AND ETHNIC IDENTITY

	HONOR	NON-HONOR	ALL
CONFORMITY	0	0	0
DISSONANCE	2	0	2
RESISTANCE	0	0	0
INTROSPECTION	0	0	0
AWARENESS	25	6	31

TABLE 5

DISTRIBUTION OF SUBJECTS BY PROGRAM STATUS AND RACIAL IDENTITY

	HONOR	NON-HONOR	ALL
PURE SCORES			
PRE-ENCOUNTER (PE)	0	1	1
ENCOUNTER (EN)	5	4	9
IMMERSION/EMERSION (IM)	0	6	6
INTERNALIZATION (IN)	21	16	37
	26 (.72)	21 (.49)	
IN-EN // EN-IN	10	12	22
IM-EN // EN-IM	0	4	4
IN-IM	0	3	3
PE-IM	0	1	1
IN-PE	0	1	1
IN-IM-EN	0	1	1
	10 (.28)	22 (.51)	32
	36	43	

TABLE 6A

OUTCOME DATA - DAYS PRESENT 1986/87

	HONOR (.86)	NON-HONOR (.76)
OTHER (.81)	.89	.67
BLACK (.77)	.76	.78

TABLE 6A

OUTCOME DATA - DAYS PRESENT 1987/88

	HONOR (.97)	NON-HONOR (.85)
OTHER (.93)	.96	.82
BLACK (.91)	.97	.86

TABLE 7A

OUTCOME DATA - COURSES PASSED 1986/87

	HONOR (.89)	NON-HONOR (.58)
OTHER (.67)	.83	.58
BLACK (.65)	.90	.58

TABLE 7B

OUTCOME DATA - COURSES PASSED 1987/88

	HONOR (.94)	NON-HONOR (.68)
OTHER (.88)	.94	.61
BLACK (.80)	.93	.69

TABLE 8

DISTRIBUTION OF SUBJECTS BY TRANSITION AND PURE SCORE STATUS

	HONOR	NON-HONOR	ALL
TRANSITION (Both Scales)	4 (.12)	11 (.26)	15 (.20)
TRANSITION (Ego Scale)	4 (.12)	6 (.14)	10 (.13)
TRANSITION (Racial Scale)	6 (.18)	10 (.24)	16 (.21)
PURE SCORES	19 (.58)	15 (.36)	34 (.46)

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Blocked Academic Programs in DPP

Joseph Gerics

Abstract

This substudy examines the different modes of operation of four blocked academic programs, that is, programs in which student schedules are blocked together for some or all of their courses, in three high schools. The STARS program at School 2, a holding program for students truant in their previous semester, served those students most at risk. STARS offered a supportive environment designed to provide the experience of academic success for disaffected students. The Reservoir program, also at School 2, was designed for students who had experienced a degree of success in their prior semester; consequently its members were least at risk. Reservoir was designed as a stricter academic environment, and entry into the program was optional on the students' part. RCR at School 6 and the Minischool at School 5 both served populations at somewhat greater risk than their host school's DPP population in general. RCR was designed as a Kohlberg "just community" for at risk students. The Minischool offered the broadest range of counseling opportunities, focusing on crisis intervention and referral to a greater extent than the other three programs.

The substudy reports on the four blocked academic programs from a variety of perspectives. Programs were observed in Years Two and Three. Students and staff were interviewed in Year Three. Data on each program were also available from the Year Two Teachers College High School Survey. Reservoir and Minischool students endorsed their programs most strongly, with Reservoir students rating both the teachers in the program and the academic demands of the program most highly. RCR and STARS students also generally approved their programs, although their evaluations were mixed.

Outcome data on grades and attendance is at first sight contradictory: Three of the programs showed attendance gains, but three programs showed losses in courses passed, and the program with the largest gain in attendance also had the largest loss in courses passed. Attendance gains found were due in part to a "survivor effect" resulting from the sampling procedure which drew the substudy evaluation sample from Spring rosters. Grades data are interpreted in light of differing program rationales and consequent grading procedures.

The report concludes that blocked programs can effectively maintain attendance even for the portion of DPP students most at risk. A two-tiered blocking strategy may be effective in assigning students to programs offering appropriate degrees of academic demands. Such a strategy, however, should not be a mere sorting procedure, but should provide increased support services to all students.

BLOCKED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The four programs in three high schools that are the subject of this substudy share one common feature that makes them exceptional in DPI: they all offer "blocked" academic programs, that is, special academic programs in which at risk students are clustered together for some of their courses. Blocked academic programs are attempts to create small supportive communities within the larger mainstream institution. There are considerable variations among these blocked programs, in terms of size, program rationale, school support, whether the program is optional, and the extent to which students' schedules are blocked together. This introduction details some of the differences in program operation.

Table One profiles several characteristics of four blocked academic programs.

STARS was a holding program at School 2 for students truant in their previous semester. Students were automatically assigned to this program solely on the basis of attendance: twenty-five or more absences prior to a certain date, though many had 50 to 60 absences. Long-term absentees (LTAs) were also included on the roster. (In a few cases where high absence was due to travel, sickness or pregnancy and not truancy, students were reassigned to mainstream classes). In part because the program was designed for students frequently out of school, there was no prior consultation between student and guidance counselor regarding this placement, and the teachers were responsible for describing program rationale at the start of the semester. One teacher described the purpose of the program as "to get the students into a student mentality," that is, "to come to school, not to be late, not to walk around the school." The program sought to address, in her words, "not just academic achievement, but the whole student--academic and other problems as well."

A large number of students was enrolled in the program, between 400 and 550 in the Fall term, and between 250 and 300 in the Spring term. The number in the Spring term was lower because LTAs had been cleared from the STARS roster. A number of these were LTAs who never set foot in the school because they had either completed the process of dropping out or had moved; on most days, attendance was well under 100. This program worked closely with the school's CBO; many of the students who attended STARS regularly received outreach services from the CBO.

Once enrolled in STARS, students generally took all of their classes together. The day began with second period, since truants were believed more likely to cut first period. Two teachers provided instruction in four subject areas, Mathematics, Social Studies, English and Science. A few students earned a second Mathematics credit through one-to-one work with a third teacher. Students were also scheduled together for Physical Education. The program was designed to be less formal and to provide more individual attention than did mainstream classes.

RCR was a Kohlberg just community enrolling about 100 students at School 6. There were four teachers in the program, three of whose positions in RCR were .4 time. These three teachers were each assigned three class periods per day in their respective subject areas, and two per day in RCR. The fourth teacher was the coordinator, whose non-program teaching was limited to one class to compensate for her coordinating duties. Support staff has varied; one year a guidance counselor was assigned exclusively to the program, but the following year she was given an additional caseload, and a family assistant was assigned to the program. In Year Three, students were assigned to RCR without being consulted in the Fall, but in response to objections from several students community members, this practice was altered in the Spring, and students were given an option of enrolling or not.

The students in this program spent official class and between five and ten periods per week together in the four basic components of the program, although the time allotted to each component has varied from year to year. The first component was an academic curriculum (taught variously as an English, a Social Studies or a Life Skills course) which met four days per week. The course material and design has changed from year to year. One year the term was designed around Kohlberg's moral dilemmas, and the Spring around Animal Farm. Another year the students rotated among the four teachers, each of whom taught either the Black experience, the Holocaust, Social Injustice or Religious Persecution. Another year the course involved remedial academic skills and study habits, and practical skills such as leadership training, public speaking and job preparation.

A second component was the "core group," meetings held by one teacher with an assigned group of students to discuss problems that had arisen in the final two program components, Community and Committee meetings. The third component was the Fairness, Agenda and Activities Committees, small group meetings which planned and carried out cluster-wide responsibilities. Finally, the fourth component was the Community meeting, at which committee recommendations were discussed and decided upon by the entire program membership, both staff and students. Relatively few of the students in RCR received CBO services, despite attempts reported by the RCR coordinator to secure CBO services for community members.

The Minischool at School 6 targeted those at risk students with the highest degree of risk: suspended students, LTAs, overage students, and those who had passed one subject or no subjects. It carried 100 to 115 students on its roster each semester, 70 to 80 of whom maintained ongoing contact with the school, and 55 to 65 of whom came to school fairly regularly. All the students enrolled in this program were interviewed before entry.

In addition to an alternative academic program, the Minischool offered more intensive support services than the other three blocked academic programs. It provided smaller classes; more intensive individual and group counseling, academic advisement and tutoring; and greater availability of internships, job-development and counseling. It was deliberately designed to address a broad range of students' and families' problems beyond school, and an important part of the program's work was referral to social service agencies and community organizations, as the staff dealt with drug problems, court assistance and housing problems. Despite frequent referrals to community agencies, students in the Minischool had the lowest rate of CBO services of the blocked programs.

The staff consisted of two guidance counselors, two family workers, along with five teachers, who each taught four classes per day. Their teaching assignments were reduced .2 to permit staff meetings and meeting time with students for informal counseling or individual help. Classes were smaller in size than are mainstream classes, but the focus of the program was not academic. In the words of the coordinator, "the curriculum is secondary; the kids are primary." Teachers were quite free in designing the curriculum of their courses, and for the most part worked on them independently of each other.

A unique feature of this program was its location. Its classes were held in rooms shared with the rest of the school, but its physical center was a cluster of three offices. The main outer office served as a lounge for staff and teachers with free periods. There were two inner offices, one a workspace for the family workers and program coordinator, the other a private office for individual counseling. The door between the two main offices was always open, except during confidential conferences with parents or students. Students hung out in the lounge, and students and staff ate lunch and snacks together. The office atmosphere was warm, friendly, and informal, often with a high noise level.

Reservoir was an off-campus alternative program at School 2. It was quite different in aim and methodology from the holding program also at School 2, in part building on the successes of students from the STARS program. About half of its students were those who improved their attendance enough to be removed from the truant program. About 20% of its enrollees signed up after word of mouth from other students; 30% were referrals from guidance counselors. This program was the only one which did not segregate at risk students; the coordinator's intention was to build his program around a core of students who had been solid achievers in the past. Unlike the other programs, students were not selected based on attendance or failure criteria. The only academic requirement was that the applicant not yet have completed sophomore year.

The program was located outside the high school building, on the campus of a nearby college. The college location was used by the coordinator as a selling point for his program. It was the smallest of the programs, enrolling 45 to 50 students. There were two teachers, one for English and Social Studies, one for Math and Science. Students were blocked into two groups, about half in their first semester in the program, and half in their second. In addition to their four academic subjects, students took Physical Education. The school day ran from around 9:00 a.m. until around noon, though the second term students and a small number of first term students returned to School 2 to take additional courses in the mainstream.

Parental involvement was a central focus of the program. Parents were required to come in to pick up report cards. The teachers made phone calls and even visited student homes, just to drop in or to share a meal. As one student remarked, "No teacher ever stopped by my house before." There were a number of activities outside the school day, from intramural sports to trips. During one semester, for example, the students went ice-skating, went on a tour for a video class, visited two museums, and visited the coordinator's home. Like the other blocked academic program in School 2, most of the students in Reservoir received CBO services.

Table Two displays characteristics of students enrolled in each of the four blocked academic programs, based on a random sample of students drawn from Year Three (1987-88) rosters, supplemented with data regarding ethnicity available from the Year Two (1986-87) Student Survey.

The two programs at School 2 each enrolled roughly equal numbers of males and females. In Reservoir, students were on average 2.4 years overage for their grade. Students enrolled in Reservoir during Year Three had passed 69% of their courses the previous year, and 32.5% of them had been promoted at the end of the year. Their average attendance in Year two had been 74%.

Only a few (6.7%) Reservoir students were identified as having Limited English Proficiency status, even using standards less stringent than BOE criteria. (Students were counted as LEP if they either had scored lower than 40% on the Language Assessment Battery, or had taken a standardized test in a language other than English.) However, the Student Survey from Year Two provided a somewhat different picture. A majority (56%) of Reservoir survey respondents identified themselves as Black, but

23.5% identified themselves as Hispanic. In addition, 18% reported that a language other than English was spoken most frequently at home, 12% reporting that Spanish was spoken at home most frequently.

STARS enrolled students overage to a greater extent than any of the other three blocked academic programs, an average of 2.7 years overage. They also had passed the lowest percentage of courses in the previous year (22%), and had the smallest percentage of students who were promoted at the end of the year (10%). Year Three STARS students had lower attendance in the previous year (51%) than did students in the other three blocked academic programs.

None of the Year Three sample of STARS students were identified by BOE data as LEP. However, in Year Two, 54% of STARS survey respondents identified themselves as Hispanic, and 31% of the respondents reported that Spanish was the language spoken most frequently at home. Another 29% identified themselves as Black.

A majority (58%) of the students in RCR were female. On average, RCR students were 2.3 years overage for their grade. Year Three RCR students had passed 40% of their courses in the previous year, and 20.5% had been promoted at the end of the year. Average attendance of Year Three RCR students in the previous year was 75%, the highest of the four blocked academic programs.

RCR had the highest percentage of LEP students, 27%. This percentage is consistent with Year Two survey data, in which 25% of RCR students reported that Spanish was the language spoken most frequently at home. A plurality (47%) of students in RCR identified themselves on the survey as Hispanic; another 22% identified themselves as Black.

A majority (61%) of the students in the Minischool were male. Minischool students were less overage than students in the other three blocked academic programs, on average 1.6 years overage for their grade. Although Year Three Minischool students had passed only 40% of their courses in the previous year, 79% of them had been promoted to the next grade at the end of Year Two. Average attendance of Year Three Minischool enrollees in the previous year was 61%.

In the Minischool, 12% of the students were identified as LEP on the basis of BOE data. However, on the Year Two survey, 21% of the Minischool respondents reported that Spanish was the language spoken most often at home. The Year Two survey found that a majority (56%) of the Minischool students were Hispanic, and that 37.5% were Black.

These four blocked academic programs were observed through Years Two and Three. Besides staff interviews and program observations in both years, three other sources of data provided additional perspectives on each program. First, a sample of students from each program was interviewed individually in the Spring of Year Three. Second, the respondents to the Year Two Teachers College High School Survey included students then enrolled in each program. Finally, outcomes from BOE data were analyzed for a random sample of students drawn from Year Three rosters of each program.

I. Student Interviews

One perspective on blocked academic programs was available from in-depth interviews conducted with a sample of students in each program. Between seven and ten students enrolled in each of the four blocked programs participated in semistructured interviews. Approximately half of them were selected randomly, and half were identified by program staff as their "success stories." The latter group was chosen in order to ensure representation of students with whom the staff felt the program had succeeded on the staff's own terms. Content analysis uncovered no systemic differences between the two groups. However, because the interviews were conducted in the Spring of Year Three, a "survivor effect" may have been operative: students dissatified with the programs may have dropped out or transferred to other programs by then.

The interviews lasted between thirty-five and seventy-five minutes. Students were asked about program enrollment procedures, their experiences in the classroom, their relationships with their teachers, and their overall assessment of the program.

There was considerable variation in student experience reported in interviews by participants in these four blocked programs. Students were unanimously enthusiastic in endorsing two programs, but mixed in their evaluations of the other two. Particularly striking was the language used by students in the the Minischool and Reservoir programs to describe their experience.

Ten students in the Minischool (five randomly chosen, five selected by staff as "success stories") were interviewed. They were unanimous in saying they liked the program. In fact, six of them independently used "family" as a metaphor to describe their experience. This metaphor was applied to the head of the program, who was described as a father, as well as to the program as a whole. Students used it to describe classroom management and the way conflicts were handled, in both cases contrasting Minischool procedures with those of the mainstream.

All ten students noticed differences between Minischool and mainstream teachers. Minischool teachers were perceived to approach their subject material differently, and the availability of Minischool teachers' free time for extra help was noted. Understanding and caring were frequently cited by students as characterizing Minischool teachers, in contrast with mainstream teachers described as solely concerned with subject matter.

Similar language was used by students enrolled in the Reservoir program. Seven students (four random, three "success stories") were interviewed, and five of them independently used the family metaphor to describe the program. The two teachers in the program were said to be "like your mother and father," but the metaphor was used in reference to relationships among students as well. Six of the seven students were unequivocal in their preference for the off-campus alternative over the mainstream, and the main reason cited was the teachers' involvement in students' lives.

Despite the similarity in student descriptions of the bonding within these two programs in terms of a family metaphor, differences in the textures of their descriptions should be noted. In the Minischool, students detailed the family metaphor in terms of classroom management, individual attention, and collective problem solving. In characterizing their blocked program, they described the positive regard between student and teacher, which they contrasted with their previous experience in the mainstream. In the Reservoir program, on the other hand, students focused not only on the teacher-student relationship, but on academics as such. They perceived the greater academic challenge in the program as stimulating a sense of community because all of them, teachers as well as students, were engaged in a common task, and worked together more closely as a result. For example, students noted a program requirement that when absent, they were required to phone another student to learn about and make up missed assignments prior to their return to classes.

Student descriptions of their experience in these two programs reflected a difference in the way teachers understood their roles and accordingly defined their students. The staff of the Minischool collectively agreed with the program design intended by the program head, who described the Minischool as a "social service agency that features a school." Precisely the same phrase was used by a guidance counselor to describe the program. Observations detailed the ways in which this program description affected the ways staff defined their responsibilities. For example, teachers with problems in classroom management were left to themselves to solve them, as the program head spent his time intervening in various crises in students' lives.

The role of academics in the Reservoir program was quite different. The program head hoped that "the different, more mature environment will bring about academic success, improved attendance and college aspirations in some students." A list of requirements detailing student responsibilities regarding attendance, lateness, homework, tests, and study provided to potential participants contrasted with the Minischool's attempts to minimize school pressures.

Students were mixed in their descriptions of both STARS and RCR. Seven students (four selected randomly, three "success stories") from RCR were interviewed. Perhaps because students in this program were blocked together for only two courses, taking the bulk of their other courses independently, academics was rarely discussed at any length. All but one of the students liked the program, and each of these six spoke of the personal bonds between community members. All six found their just community teachers to be more involved with them and more concerned about them than their other teachers. One of these six, who generally appeciated the additional involvement, included a note of disapproval. The seventh student offered a strongly negative assessment of what he saw as teacher intrusion.

Four students specifically noted the active role students played in the community, and three of these brought up ways in which the just community changed the social relations between students and teachers. Several commented on activities extending beyond the school day, such as community-building trips.

Seven students then enrolled in STARS were interviewed (four chosen randomly, three "success stories"), as well as three who had earlier participated in STARS but had since moved into the Reservoir program. The three who were no longer enrolled in STARS had similar assessments of its academic requirements; they all felt the academic demands were more reasonable than those of the mainstream. One of the three was positive in her retroactive assessment of STARS, citing the shorter hours and fewer assignments. The other two were mixed, simultaneously approving of the lighter academic load as a means for re-entry into the mainstream, but claiming that "you learn more in the mainstream" and that the program "didn't help me that much."

Four students enrolled in STARS at the time of their interviews mentioned academics as a factor in their mixed assessments of the program. They all found the work easier, but two were specifically critical of the classwork, both independently describing it as "junior high" work, and one additionally claiming that there was but one lesson a day.

Students expressed little sense of belonging to a community or of group identity in this program. None mentioned group or shared activities. Two did speak positively of their peers in the holding program, mentioning positive relationships with friends in the program. However, four were critical of the effects of grouping at risk students in such large numbers, citing the negative effects of disruptive behavior on program operations.

II. Survey

A second perspective on blocked academic programs was available from the Year Two Teachers College High School survey, administered to a sample of students in each of the four programs. However, the sample was randomly drawn in only one program, the Minischool, because of the difficulty in locating students in programs targeting at risk students, due to cutting, absence or ignored notices. For example, two survey administrations at School 6 intended for 100 respondents produced only 29. Therefore, a different sampling procedure was used for three of the blocked programs: The survey was administered to all the students enrolled in the program who were present for either of two administrations of the survey. This variation in sampling procedure clearly affected survey results, as repeated attempts over a four-day period to survey School 5 students resulted in a sample from the Minischool overrepresenting (in relation to the other three program samples) students with higher cutting and absentee rates, who were presumably more disenchanted with school. Therefore survey results cannot be used to compare all four programs, although the samples for STARS, RCR, and the Reservoir program were comparable. The sampling procedure at School 5 included 36 respondents enrolled in the Minischool, and their responses are included in the tables in this section. In scoring each question, the scales were ordered so that higher scores indicated more positive responses.

Some of the items provided information about student characteristics. These questions and mean responses by program are listed in Table Three. Survey data revealed only small differences across the programs in student reports of degree of parental interest and involvement in their education, in the extent to which student families are intact, and in parental education.

The survey also included questions about a number of areas of student life in schools. Table Four displays mean responses for each blocked program on a number of items pertaining to students perceptions of themselves as students. The differences between programs on these items are relatively small.

Another series of questions, contained in Table Five, asked students about their reasons for absences. On five items (absence due to illness, to suspension, to problems at home, to moving with one's family, and to being needed to care for someone at home), there were only small differences between programs. However, there were fairly large differences on four items. Reservoir students attributed the fewest absences to work, to wanting to do something with friends, and to problems with teachers or other adults at school. Reservoir students were also a close second to RCR students in attributing the fewest absences to not feeling like going. STARS students attributed the greatest number of absences to not feeling like going and to wanting to be with friends. Minischool students reported the most absences due to work and to problems with a teacher or other adult at school.

These findings confirm interview and observation data. Reservoir teachers put the highest stress on school attendance and performance. STARS students, on the other hand, were often left to their own devices during class time, and it is not surprising that peer influence was more influential in their absences. Likewise, tensions between students and mainstream teachers were observed to be greater in the Minischool than in the other three blocked programs, and the Minischool program put the greatest stress on finding students jobs. These two factors account for the attributions of Minischool absences.

Items inquiring about school safety are shown in Table Six. There were only small differences between the four blocked programs in student reports of feeling afraid of being hurt or bothered in school or an the way to or from school. However, there were large differences in student reports of having witnessed or having been involved in violence in school. Reservoir students scored the highest on all five measures, indicating the least frequent violent incidents. This was expected, given Reservoir's off-site location on a college campus. Minischool students reported the most frequent violent incidents in three categories; STARS and RCR reported the most frequent violent incidents in one category each.

A number of questions asked about student perceptions of teachers. The results are displayed in Table Seven. On all five of the survey items in this area, Reservoir teachers were rated the highest. The ratings given the Minischool teachers were the lowest on four of the five items. This finding was surprising, given student responses during the interviews, and is likely due to the survey sampling procedure in which disaffected students were overrepresented in the Minischool sample.

Reservoir students also answered most positively to a number of items rating their fellow students, shown in Table Eight, although the differences between blocked programs were much smaller in this group of questions. Reservoir students scored highest on three of five items, tied for first on a fourth item, and tied for second on the fifth. The STARS and Minischool students each rated their peers lowest on two of the items.

Students in the Reservoir program also answered most positively to a series of questions dealing with academic issues. Table Nine lists mean scores for each program on three items inquiring about schoolwork, and three items about homework. Reservoir students answered most positively on five of the six items, and ranked a close second on the sixth item. The Minischool students answered most negatively on each of the six items. Regarding Reservoir, these findings confirm interview data; the Minischool findings again reflect variations in sampling procedures for the four programs.

III. Outcomes

Because many of the students selected for the substudy random sample of each blocked program had not been included in TC's evaluation random sample, outcome measures suffer from missing data. Both STARS and RCR are represented by relatively small samples for grades data. More information was available on attendance for three of the four programs, but once again the STARS sample was small.

Table Ten displays attendance data for each of the blocked programs. Students in three blocked programs showed attendance gains in Year Three. Only RCR students lost attendance, -8.1%. Both Minischool and STARS students gained slightly in attendance, 1.5% and 1.9% respectively. The largest gain in attendance was recorded by Reservoir students, 3.5%.

Outcome data regarding courses passed is listed in Table Eleven. In contrast to the attendance data, students in three of the four blocked programs passed smaller proportions of their courses, with the largest losses occurring in Reservoir, -18.86. Losses in courses passed in the Minischool and RCR programs were comparable, -8.48 and -8.97 respectively. Only the STARS sample showed a gain in courses passed, 2.02%. Table Twelve, which breaks down the number of students in the random sample of each program for whom grade data was available according to categories of courses passed in both Years Two and Three, shows the size of the sample for each blocked program.

Not only did students in three of the four blocked programs pass a smaller proportion of their courses; in the same three programs, students also enrolled in fewer courses in Year Three. As shown in Table Thirteen, only in STARS did most students (62.5%) enroll in more or as many courses in Year Three as in Year Two. A minority of the students in each program were able to pass more courses in Year Three than in Year Two.

The attendance gains found in this substudy are due in part to the sampling procedures. In drawing an evaluation sample for the blocked programs, two strategies were possible, using Fall or Spring rosters. Fall rosters were used to draw TC's evaluation random sample. However, this procedure would penalize programs such as STARS, which enroll students who never came to school at all. Because the Minischool was believed to have the greatest continuity from term to term, an October roster was used in that case. For three programs it was decided to draw the random sample for this substudy from Spring rosters, since they had been cleared of the names of students who had never attended the programs. A result of this sampling decision was a "survivor effect," that is, gains in attendance that appear inflated in comparison to attendance rates of samples of the DPP population that included students later dropped from the rosters of the blocked academic programs.

V. Discussion

Besides sampling procedures, a further factor complicates the interpretation of the outcome data in this report: Differences in program philosophy and rationale resulted in differences in the population served by each program, as well as differences in outcomes. STARS, for example, automatically enrolled any student truant in the previous semester. Accordingly STARS students, who had the fewest days attended and fewest courses passed in Year Two, can be considered most at risk of those enrolled in blocked academic programs. Reservoir students, on the other hand, were selected in large part from among those who had been successful in STARS the previous year, and its enrollees further indicated in an entrance interview that they were willing to participate in what was presented as an academically demanding program. Consequently Reservoir students had the highest prior proportions of days attended and courses passed, and were less at risk on these two measures.

However, overage was found by DPEP to be the most significant factor in predicting dropout. On this risk characteristic, Reservoir students (on average 2.4 years overage) were second only to STARS (2.7 years overage). Apparently the extensive and intensive personal supports provided in the Reservoir program were especially effective in improving the attendance rates of the survivor overage students who showed attendance gains.

When compared to these two outlier programs, the Minischool and RCR held intermediate positions on Year Two attendance and grade data. However, on both measures, students in the blocked programs were at greater risk than were DPP students in their host high schools. In Year Two, School 6 DPP students had an attendance rate of 75.1%, virtually the same as RCR students (74.9%). However, School 6 DPP students passed 52.1% of their courses, a rate 11.5% better than that of RCR students. Similarly, School 5 DPP students had a Year Two attendance rate of 71.1%, exceeding that of Minischool students by 10.4%. School 5 students also passed 47.6% of their classes, 7.6% more than did Minischool students. In short, except for Reservoir, blocked academic programs served students at greater risk than the DPP population in general at their host schools.

The attendance gain shown by the Reservoir program in Year Three is therefore particularly noteworthy. Students had probably already shown attendance gains in Year Two in order to qualify for Reservoir, as suggested by their relatively high Year Two attendance rates. Nonetheless Reservoir students demonstrated the largest attendance gains in Year Three. Also notable is the extent of the loss in attendance recorded by RCR, the only program to lose attendance.

Data on courses passed is also problematic. It is first important to note the number of teachers grading students in each program. Minischool students generally received grades from five or six different teachers, at least one of whom was a mainstream teacher. RCR students were graded by four or five teachers in addition to their two RCR courses, the only exception being a small proportion of RCR students who had an RCR teacher for their Mathematics courses. In these two programs, differences in grading procedures among individual teachers counted comparatively lightly on students' overall performance. In contrast, in STARS and Reservoir, two teachers each taught their students two courses, and in some cases students enrolled in no other courses. Consequently differences in grading philosophy between STARS and Reservoir teachers would tend to inflate differences in number of courses passed.

Such was in fact the case. Losses in courses passed were comparable for RCR (-8.97%) and Minischool (-8.48%). On the other hand, the large losses in courses passed for Reservoir (-18.86%) and the slight gain for STARS (2.02%) must be understood in light of other data regarding academic demands in these two programs. Observation, interview and survey data indicate that STARS, as a holding program for students with little previous academic success, had relatively few and relatively light academic requirements, insofar as the teachers' express purpose was to reward success whenever possible. In fact, despite program claims that "regular attendance" is required, students sometimes passed courses with a flurry of activity at the end of a semester, simply by completing the appropriate number of assignments, even if they had attended school rarely during the first two marking periods of that semester.

Reservoir teachers, on the other hand, tried to impress on students the importance of personal accountability from the very beginning. They were less likely to lower standards established upon entry to the program, and tried to foster a strict academic atmosphere characterized by high expectations from students. Consequently, the more demanding grading procedures in Reservoir during Year Three, in combination with more lenient grading in STARS (in which many Year Three Reservoir students had been enrolled during Year Two), contributed to the large loss in percentage of courses passed recorded by Reservoir in Year Three. Similarly, the RCR coordinator felt that grading procedures in RCR were more stringent than those in other blocked programs. For that reason, she felt the use of grades as a criterion tended to penalize RCR, since students were likely to get lower grades in that program because teachers did not lower academic standards.

Each blocked academic program was an attempt to create a more intimate, supportive school community by isolating a smaller group of students within a larger, anonymous institution. The programs were each constructed according to different models of what a school community ought intend. RCR was founded on the idea that the experience of justice and fairness in a community setting was central to improving school performance. The Minischool was designed to marshall a number of school and community resources, particularly intensive counseling and adult-student involvement, to help students work through problems encountered in school. Reservoir emphasized the development of school-parent ties and strong teacher involvement together with strict academic expectations. STARS attempted to provide the experience of academic success and teacher regard to alter its students' previous experiences of school failure.

Which model(s) work? On its own terms, each one did. Of the four blocked programs, students in STARS, for example, scored highest on three, and second on two more, of the six survey items pertaining to students' assessment of their schoolwork and of themselves as students. STARS did provide previously unsuccessful students with a sense that they can be successful in school by minimizing school requirements.

In Reservoir, the emphasis was on teacher involvement and academic performance. In this program, students taking the survey rated their teachers the highest on all five items measuring student-teacher relationships. In addition, Reservoir students scored highest on five of six items dealing with academic demands, and second on the sixth item. Reservoir successfully communicated the importance of quality of acdemic performance. Reservoir's strategy was successful for students dissatisfied with the academic requirements of STARS, but the constraints of the Reservoir program were inappropriate for the students with whom STARS had success.

The Minischool had the most obvious agenda beyond school performance. Besides the emphasis on support services evident in the design of the program, the program coordinator made no secret of his belief that school was not necessarily what every one of the students in the Minischool needed. In counseling, his emphasis was on helping students achieve their goals, and if that meant helping them leave school, he did so. In addition, the program stressed helping troubled students find jobs or other non-school placements such as G.E.D. programs or job-training.

RCR intended to build a just community, and several students commented on the quality of relationships between students and teachers within the program. Students in this program rated their peers most highly on two of five items regarding peer relationships, and second on two more.

In short, it seems that each blocked program had a different understanding of its mission, although these missions overlapped significantly. Each chose a different avenue for serving at risk students. Each can claim a degree of success in achieving its aims. When considering students who stayed in the program for a full term, three of the four can claim success in improving attendance as well, and one can claim success in improving grades. The gains, however, must be read in light of the fact that all four programs showed losses in both grades and attendance for the random sample of students drawn from Fall rosters.

These findings suggest that no blocked academic program will be successful for all students. Blocked academic programs can effectively maintain attendance for some students, even for some of those at greatest risk, yet can be ineffective for others less at risk. Blocked academic programs which effectively match the needs of some groups of at risk students fail to touch the needs of others.

Moreover, the success of Reservoir in improving attendance for some students recommends the implementation of a two-tiered blocking strategy as employed by School 2: first, a program for students screened as having severe problems in attendance or academics, and second, a more stringent program for students willing to explicitly commit themselves to the requirements of high school.

However, such a two-tiered strategy ought not be a mere sorting procedure, as it is at School 2, in which those students who succeeded in STARS moved on to the more demanding Reservoir program. Schools must also increase their efforts on behalf of LTAs or other students with low prior-year rates of attendance or courses passed. Block-scheduling smaller groups of students together for some or most of their courses with a small nucleus of teachers does not in itself improve rates of attendance or courses passed. Interviews with students identified by staff as success stories found that students improved their performance when they experienced a sense of commitment and involvement on the part of their teachers. Accordingly blocking strategies should include increased staff-student contact beyond classtime, in either formal meetings (group or individual guidance) or informal meetings (lunch together or recreation after school).

Interview and survey data reveal the advantages of clustering students who had previously experienced school problems yet had begun to overcome them, apart from students still struggling with their commitment to school. RCR and the Mini-school made no distinction between these two groups of students, enrolling students who had made improvements alongside students still in the midst of a history of academic failure, cutting and absence. Former STARS students who had moved on to the Reservoir program described the instructional and disciplinary difficulties the latter group of students posed not only for teachers, but also for those of their classmates who had decided to change their ways. It is therefore no surprise that on most survey items in which relatively large differences were found between groups, Reservoir students answered most positively. Of particular interest are Reservoir responses to items involving student regard for teachers, student regard for other students, and student perception of academic demands.

The survey data regarding academic demands are especially instructive. Teachers of at risk students often speak of the necessity of accomodating academic demands to the interests and abilities of their students; this generally meant lowering academic expectations and requirements. Interview and survey data demonstrated that at least for the group of students ready to commit themselves to Reservoir, such accomodation was not necessary. Despite passing fewer courses, Reservoir students enjoyed their classwork more and were more likely to do homework. Moreover, students who had been successful in STARS, the program characterized by the largest degree of academic accomodation, were sometimes critical of the quality of work expected of them, describing it as "junior high work."

Apparently Reservoir students responded positively to the academic challenge in the program, even though their increased effort resulted in fewer courses passed. This issue of academic standards versus credit accumulation deserves further consideration. Some teachers, recognizing the histories of school failure at risk students bring with them, are inclined to award relatively high grades on the basis of improvement, instead of grading according to external criteria of performance. Other teachers, while remaining sensitive to the needs of at risk students, judge such academic accomodation and flexible criteria as compromising the integrity of the grading system. Because of these unresolved differences in grading prodedures, isolated measures of courses passed may be misleading as measures of progress toward graduation. Attention must be paid not only to the needs of at risk students to accumulate credits and experience academic success, but also to the level of achievement expected within courses targeting at risk students. For example, in interviews DPP teachers report the difficulty many students find in passing the Mathematics RCT. Short-term increases in courses passed alone may not signify progress toward graduation if at risk students are not prepared to pass city-wide examinations.

In sum, the data suggest that although blocked programs do not produce a gain in courses passed, blocked academic programs can be successful in maintaining student attendance, even for students more at risk than the DPP population at large. A two-tiered strategy of intervention involving a holding program followed by a more demanding academic program can effectively bolster student satisfaction with school, while permitting short-term academic accomodation for students requiring the experience of success in a less rigid academic environment.

Table One. Profiles of blocked academic programs.

	Reservoir	STARS	RCR	Minischool
Approximate number of students enrolled	45	400-500 (Fall) 250-300 (Spring)	100	100
Number of teachers assigned to program	2, full-time	3, full-time	4, part-time	5, full-time
Student choice in program enrollment	Yes	No	No (Fall) Yes (Spring)	Yes
Number of courses blocked together	5	5	2	5
Percentage of students receiving CBO services (N)	96.4 (28)	100 (16)	17.9 (41)	7.3 (39)

Table Two. Student Characteristics in Blocked Academic Programs.

	Reservoir	STARS	RCR	Minischool
Gender				
% Male	50.0	52.2	41.9	60.9
% Female	50.0	47.8	58.1	39.1
(Sample N)	(46)	(42)	(43)	(46)
Overage, number of years				
% 0 years overage	0.0	4.4	4.7	13.0
% 1 year overage	23.8	28.9	14.0	28.3
% 2 years overage	31.0	37.8	44.2	47.8
% 3 or more years overage	45.2	28.9	37.2	10.9
Average number of years overage, per student	2.4	2.7	2.3	1.6
(Sample N)	(42)	(45)	(43)	(46)
Promoted in Spring 1987				
% promoted	32.5	9.8	20.5	79.1
% failed	67.5	90.2	79.5	20.9
(Sample N)	(40)	(41)	(39)	(43)
% Courses Passed, 1986-87	69.1%	21.8%	39.6%	40.0%
(Sample N)	(28)	(16)	(38)	(35)
% Days Present, 1986-87	74.2%	51.4%	74.9%	60.7%
(Sample N)	(28)	(16)	(38)	(38)
Limited English Proficiency				
% LEP	6.7	0.0	27.3	12.2
% non-LEP	93.3	100.0	72.7	87.8
(Sample N)	(45)	(48)	(44)	(49)
Ethnicity*				
Black	55.9	28.6	22.2	37.5
Hispanic	23.5	54.3	47.2	56.3
Asian		2.9	2.8	6.3
White			2.8	
Other	17.6	8.6	11.1	
Missing	2.9	5.7	13.9	
(Sample N)	(34)	(35)	(36)	(36)
Language Spoken Most at Home, Percentage*				
English	79.4	65.7	52.8	79.3
Spanish	11.8	31.4	25.0	20.7
Other	5.8		2.8	
Missing	2.9	2.9	19.4	
(Sample N)	(34)	(35)	(36)	(36)

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*Data from Year Two Teachers College High School Survey

Table Three. Mean Survey Responses on Items Describing Student Characteristics

	Reservoir (N)	STARS (N)	Mini-school (N)	RCR (N)	Four Program Total (S.D.)
My parents (or guardians) would be disappointed if I did not attend school regularly.	1.91 (33)	1.88 (34)	1.84 (32)	1.93 (30)	1.91 (.29)
My parents (or guardians) keep close track of how well I am doing in school.	1.85 (34)	1.85 (34)	1.77 (31)	1.78 (32)	1.77 (.42)
My parents (or guardians) almost always know where I am and what I am doing.	1.71 (34)	1.61 (33)	1.61 (31)	1.64 (33)	1.62 (.49)
Which of the following live in your home?					
Mother, stepmother or female guadian.	1.91 (34)	1.94 (31)	1.83 (29)	1.81 (32)	1.89 (.32)
Father, stepfather or male guardian.	1.41 (34)	1.33 (30)	1.55 (29)	1.43 (30)	1.43 (.50)
How far did your father (stepfather or male guardian) go in school?	2.76 (30)	2.57 (21)	2.39 (18)	2.28 (21)	2.50 (.99)
How far did your mother (stepmother or female guardian) go in school?	2.67 (33)	2.38 (21)	2.85 (26)	2.39 (23)	2.58 (1.03)

Table Four. Mean Survey Responses on Items Describing Student Self-perception.

	Reservoir (N)	STARS (N)	Mini-school (N)	RCR (N)	Four Program Total (S.D.)
I am very happy when I am in school.	2.45 (33)	2.53 (32)	2.38 (32)	2.40 (33)	2.44 (1.00)
In the kinds of things we do in school, I am at least as good as other people in my classes.	1.82 (34)	1.83 (32)	1.66 (32)	1.73 (33)	1.74 (.44)
When I don't do well in school, I usually can't figure out why.	1.71 (34)	1.68 (34)	1.58 (31)	1.61 (33)	1.62 (.49)
Most of the time I think my schoolwork is not very good.	1.59 (34)	1.68 (34)	1.56 (32)	1.63 (35)	1.61 (.49)
Most of the time I do not want to go to school.	1.41 (32)	1.44 (34)	1.45 (33)	1.51 (35)	1.43 (.50)
I often feel unsuccessful in school.	1.74 (34)	1.60 (35)	1.59 (32)	1.55 (33)	1.61 (.49)

Table Five. Mean Survey Responses on Items Detailing Reasons for Absence.

	Reser-voir (N)	STARS (N)	Mini-school (N)	RCR (N)	Four Program Total (S.D.)
Since September, how much of the time have you been absent because:					
You were sick?	2.15 (33)	2.00 (35)	2.03 (31)	2.18 (33)	2.07 (.62)
You had to work?	3.00 (33)	2.66 (35)	2.59 (32)	2.97 (33)	2.77 (.57)
You had to take care of someone at home?	2.56 (34)	2.76 (33)	2.59 (32)	2.58 (33)	2.64 (.53)
You were suspended?	2.91 (34)	2.94 (35)	2.84 (31)	2.97 (33)	2.92 (.27)
You just didn't feel like going?	2.22 (32)	1.94 (33)	2.16 (32)	2.33 (30)	2.20 (.72)
You wanted to do something with friends?	2.69 (32)	2.32 (34)	2.41 (32)	2.49 (32)	2.49 (.68)
You had problems with a teacher or other adult at school?	2.94 (33)	2.77 (35)	2.69 (32)	2.84 (32)	2.81 (.45)
You had problems with another student or group of students?	2.97 (33)	2.85 (35)	2.88 (31)	2.78 (32)	2.85 (.37)
You had problems at home?	2.52 (33)	2.63 (35)	2.48 (31)	2.75 (32)	2.60 (.56)
Your family moved away for a while?	2.94 (33)	2.89 (35)	2.87 (31)	2.91 (33)	2.91 (.32)

Table Six. Mean Survey Responses on Items Regarding School Safety.

	Reservoir (N)	STARS (N)	Mini-school (N)	RCR (N)	Four Program Total (S.D.)
In this school year, how much of the time have you:					
Seen a student hit or attack another student?	2.97 (34)	2.26 (34)	2.52 (33)	2.59 (34)	2.46 (1.00)
Seen a student physically threaten a teacher?	3.59 (34)	2.83 (35)	2.42 (33)	3.15 (33)	2.91 (1.06)
Seen an adult at the school physically threaten a student?	3.79 (34)	3.62 (34)	3.10 (30)	3.50 (34)	3.40 (.87)
Seen a student hit or attack a teacher?	3.91 (34)	3.61 (33)	3.13 (31)	3.52 (33)	3.55 (.72)
Had to fight to protect yourself at school?	3.74 (34)	3.65 (31)	3.38 (29)	3.34 (32)	3.47 (.78)
How much of the time are you afraid someone will hurt or bother you:					
At school?	3.53 (34)	3.47 (34)	3.44 (32)	3.21 (34)	3.28 (.92)
On the way to or from school?	3.53 (34)	3.44 (34)	3.61 (31)	3.26 (34)	3.37 (.85)

Table Seven. Mean Survey Responses on Items regarding Student-Teacher Relationships

	Reservoir (N)	STARS (N)	Mini-school (N)	RCR (N)	Four Program Total (S.D.)
How much do you like the teachers?	2.61 (33)	2.24 (33)	2.24 (33)	2.20 (35)	2.28 (.59)
Teachers treat students with respect.	2.53 (34)	1.97 (33)	1.94 (33)	2.11 (35)	2.11 (.66)
Teachers do things that make students feel put down.	2.15 (34)	2.11 (35)	1.94 (33)	2.14 (35)	2.06 (.63)
Teachers really listen to what I have to say.	2.65 (34)	2.24 (34)	2.03 (33)	2.26 (31)	2.28 (.67)
Teachers here care about the students.	2.91 (34)	2.09 (35)	1.97 (33)	2.17 (35)	2.23 (.69)

Table Eight. Mean Survey Responses on Items regarding Student-Peer Relationships

	Reservoir (N)	STARS (N)	Mini-school (N)	RCR (N)	Four Program Total (S.D.)
How much do you like the students?	2.21 (34)	2.00 (34)	2.15 (33)	2.20 (35)	2.10 (.55)
Most of my friends think getting good grades is important.	1.76 (34)	1.76 (34)	1.73 (31)	1.79 (34)	1.80 (.40)
Most of my friends think school is a pain.	1.47 (34)	1.35 (34)	1.36 (31)	1.47 (34)	1.43 (.50)
My friends try to get me to do things the teachers don't like.	1.88 (34)	1.76 (34)	1.68 (31)	1.79 (34)	1.77 (.42)
Most of my friends belong to a gang.	1.91 (34)	1.85 (34)	1.74 (31)	1.78 (33)	1.82 (.39)

Table Nine. Mean Survey Responses on Items regarding Academic Demands.

	Reservoir (N)	STARS (N)	Mini-school (N)	RCR (N)	Four Program Total (S.D.)
I enjoy the work I do in class.	2.82 (34)	2.74 (34)	2.48 (33)	2.86 (36)	2.73 (.89)
In my classes I learn about things I'm interested in.	2.67 (33)	2.65 (34)	2.18 (34)	2.34 (35)	2.48 (.95)
Schoolwork is dull and boring for me.	3.34 (32)	2.61 (33)	2.48 (31)	3.08 (36)	2.87 (.93)
I turn in my homework on time.	1.85 (34)	1.74 (34)	1.36 (33)	1.48 (33)	1.58 (.49)
I don't bother with homework or class assignments.	1.94 (34)	1.91 (34)	1.90 (33)	1.71 (34)	1.86 (.35)
If a teacher gives a lot of homework, I try to finish it all.	1.88 (34)	1.80 (35)	1.68 (34)	1.77 (35)	1.78 (.41)

Table Ten. Attendance in Years Two and Three in Four Blocked Academic Programs

	Reservoir	STARS	Mini-school	RCR
Percentage days attended in Year Two (N)	74.2 (28)	51.4 (16)	60.7 (38)	74.9 (36)
Percentage days attended in Year Three (N)	77.7 (28)	53.3 (16)	65.4 (32)	67.1 (35)
Change in attendance, Year Two to Year Three (N)	3.51 (28)	1.93 (16)	1.46 (31)	-8.11 (31)

Table Eleven. Courses Passed in Years Two and Three in Four Blocked Academic Programs

	Reservoir	STARS	Mini-school	RCR
Percentage courses passed in Year Two (N)	69.1 (28)	21.8 (16)	**44.3** **(35)**	39.6 (38)
Percentage courses passed in Year Three (N)	50.2 (28)	23.9 (16)	34.7 (29)	30.8 (15)
Change in courses passed Year Two to Year Three (N)	-18.86 (28)	2.02 (16)	-8.48 (27)	-8.97 (13)

Table Twelve. Breakdown of Numbers of Students in Four Blocked Programs in Years Two and Three, by Categories of Courses Passed

	Reservoir Yr2/Yr3	STARS Yr2/Yr3	Mini-school Yr2/Yr3	RCR Yr2/Yr3
Number of students passing:				
0% of courses	10 / 3	0 / 1	3 / 1	1 / 1
1 - 39% of courses	5 / 9	3 / 2	5 / 7	6 / 3
40 - 59% of courses	7 / 4	1 / 0	9 / 3	11 / 2
60 - 79% of courses	4 / 4	0 / 2	8 / 6	11 / 1
80 - 100% of courses	2 / 8	12 / 11	10 / 12	9 / 8

Table Thirteen. Comparison of Relative Number of Courses Taken and Passed in Years Two and Three

	Reservoir	STARS	Mini-school	RCR
Percentage of students taking fewer courses in Year Three (N)	67.9 (19)	37.5 (6)	53.8 (16)	59.3 (7)
Percentage of students taking the same number of courses in Year Three (N)	10.7 (3)	25.0 (4)	15.4 (3)	11.1 (2)
Percentage of students taking more courses in Year Three (N)	21.4 (6)	37.5 (6)	30.8 (8)	29.6 (4)
Percentage of students passing more courses in Year Three (N)	33.3 (6)	37.5 (6)	33.3 (8)	30.8 (4)

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Dropout Prevention Initiative Jobs Program: Perceptions of At-Risk Students

Denise C. Willis and Carolyn M. Springer

Abstract

This study examines the impact of the New York City Dropout Prevention Initiative Jobs Program. Seventy-seven students from three high schools participating in the DPI Jobs Program in 1987-88 completed a questionnaire which assessed student demographics; the types of jobs held by students; their relationships with co-workers and supervisors; school and program support; and the impact of their jobs on students' perceptions of their skills, academics studies, and school attendance.

The majority of the students were female; the students were primarily minorities, especially hispanics; and students represented grades nine through twelve. Though the number of male and female students was about equal in the 9th and 10th grades, by the 11th and 12th grades the number of male students in the Jobs Program outnumbered male students.

Sixty-four percent of the students in this sample had "data" jobs, 22% had "people" jobs, and 14% had "things" jobs. Though the majority of students were satisfied with their jobs, students' dissatisfaction was greater when they had "things" jobs. Students were working to meet their needs and the needs of their family. The major reason students gave for dissatisfaction with their jobs was that the job was not challenging enough. Over three-quarters of the students said they got along well or very well with their boss and a similar majority said they got along well or very well with co-workers. In the students' eyes, having a job had either a positive impact or no impact on their academic motivation. Males were more likely than females to say that they would have attended school less if there had not been a Jobs Program. About half the students did not receive jobs counseling at school, and only 14% reported receiving tutoring or other special academic help while in the Jobs Program.

It is recommended that the Jobs Program be expanded, that the jobs be challenging for students, and that strong academic and counseling supports be provided for students with part-time jobs.

The Dropout Prevention Initiative Jobs Program:

Effects on At-Risk Students

As the 21st century rapidly approaches, America will be directly confronted with the reality that its nation-wide public educational system has failed to adequately and accurately train its future generation of citizens. Researchers have reported that 25% of American fifth graders will not successfully complete high school (Mann, 1987). In addition, socioeconomic status and race have been described as "the two background characteristics that are most strongly related to dropping out." Specifically, research has shown that students from a lower socioeconomic status tend to have higher dropout rates and dropout behavior tends to occur more frequently among hispanics than blacks (Ekstrom et al., 1987). Research has suggested that the dropout rate among blacks is 40 percent greater than whites and the dropout rate among hispanics is 250 percent greater than whites (Mann, 1987). The most common reasons cited by students for dropping out are school-related, job-related, and family-related issues. Sex differences have also been related to dropout behaviors with males constituting 54% of the dropout population (Mann, 1987). Research has also shown that being retained in school increases the risk of dropping out. It has been indicated that a student who is one year over age for grade will have a 40-50 percent chance of dropping out later. This increases to 90 percent for a student who is two years over age for grade (Mann, 1987). However, crucial to this study is the research which suggests that employment, during high school, is a contributing factor to dropout behavior (Ekstrom et al., 1987).

In the 1970's, blue-ribbon commissions, along with the President's Scientific Advisory Committee, expressed concern for the "signs of increasing social deviance and lack of motivation among the young" (Greenberger & Steinberg, 1986). It was recommended that adolescent involvement, in the world of work, become a "high priority" (Greenberger & Steinberg, 1986). Researchers later found that part-time employment, averaging 20 hours per week, may have had a negative impact upon adolescent schooling. That is, (1) employment appeared to promote delinquent behavior, (2) high-stress jobs led to higher rates of drug and alcohol use, and (3) employment tended to cultivate the development of negative attitudes towards work (Greenberger & Steinberg, 1986).

Current researchers have declared that there is an overall need for more comprehensive and improved data related to youth employment. Orr (1987), for example, discussed job employment and training programs that were developed to encourage dropouts to complete their high school education. Studies of these programs showed that having a job did not reduce attendance, but neither was it a sufficient incentive to keep students in school. These training programs were off-site and Orr concludes that the lack of attention given to improving students' basic skills is a possible explanation for the program's minimal impact on students' achievement in school. This points to the necessity of obtaining students' perceptions of the academic supports while they are in part-time jobs. Moreover, a mutual set of measures regarding (1) employment, (2) reasons for employment, (3) the multiple dimensions of student employment experiences, and (4) attitudinal and behavioral outcomes of employment is required (Charner et al., 1988).

Additional research has shown that adolescent males work in lower status, yet higher paying jobs than their female counterparts. These results illustrate that occupational status and wage inequities begin to occur during adolescence (Meyer, 1987). Further research has focused on vocational programs and their sex-role stereotyping (Virginia State Department of Education, 1986). Researchers have studied the vocational enrollment patterns, among male and female students, at both the secondary and postsecondary (Community College) level. It was found that men were not pursuing "women's" fields due to the low pay and the stigma caused by sex-role stereotyping (Virginia State Department of Education, Richmond, 1986).

The Dropout Prevention Initiative Jobs Program

The Dropout Prevention Initiative Project (DPI) included a job experience program for high school students as one of its components. The DPI paid minimum wages to students who work part-time in jobs that have been located by a program Job Coordinator or Job Developer. The Coordinator was also responsible for providing counseling to students participating in the program. Students, who were considered to be at-risk, were selected to participate in the Jobs Program. Participants included two types of students: 1) those who had been Long Term Absentees (LTA's) yet had returned to school and 2) students who had been attending school, but were highly vulnerable to adopting behavior patterns which could lead to dropping out. The DPI Project expected that student employment, at 15 hours per week, would have a positive effect on students' attitudes toward school and on their school attendance.

Method

Subjects

Subjects for this study were selected from 3 out of 13 D.P.I. high schools. These three schools were identified by the New York City Board of Education as having a fully implemented Jobs Program at the beginning of the 1987-88 school year.

A total of 77 students participated in this study, 66% were female and 34% were male. Students ranged in age from 15 to 20 years old, with an average age of 17. The majority (63%) of students were in the 11th and 12th grades. As can be seen in Table 1, 84% of the students in the sample were minority group members. Students were primarily hispanic (45% of the 77 students), non-hispanic blacks (27%), and hispanic blacks (12%) (see Table 1).

Insert Table 1 about here

Design/Instrument

A 38-item student questionnaire was constructed to study the Jobs Program and its effectiveness on academic performance and school attendance. Questions were devised to include both open and closed-ended items. Items on the questionnaire addressed student demographics, the types of jobs held by students and their relationships with co-workers and supervisors. Other topics covered included students' attitudes towards and satisfaction with their job placement, students' perceptions of what they had learned from their experience, and how their jobs had affected their academic studies and school attendance. Students' perceptions of academic supports, job-related feedback and support from DPI Program Staff were also assessed.

Procedure

A black female graduate student administered the questionnaires in the three selected high schools. Appointments were pre-arranged with the Jobs Coordinator at each of the three schools. Students were excused from their classes to participate in the study. Questionnaires were usually administered to small groups of students in 40-minute class periods. All items were read aloud to students who were encouraged to raise any questions they might have had. The researcher continued to visit each high school until all program participants had completed the questionnaire. Thus, the final sample consisted of almost all students who were participating in the program at the three schools at the time of data collection.

Results

Job Characteristics

Most students were earning $3.35 an hour, minimum wage. Eighty percent of the students held jobs off-site. The remaining students in the sample worked at their high school. The types of jobs students held can be classified into three categories--"people," "data," and "things." "People" jobs included working as a teaching assistant, a tutor, admitting patients or serving as an advocate. Students who were doing clerical work or working with computers were classified as having "data" jobs. Finally, "things" jobs included jobs in which students worked as cashiers, maintenance personnel, messengers, short-order cooks, stockboys, and animal caretakers. Sixty-four percent of the students in this sample had "data" jobs, 22% had "people" jobs, and 14% had "things" jobs (see Table 2).

Insert Table 2 about here

Eighty-two percent of the students indicated that it took them 30 minutes or less to travel to work; most of these students only traveled 15 minutes. Ninety-six percent of the students indicated that their travel time to work was "okay." Nearly half of the students (48%) were within walking distance of their place of employment.

Two-thirds of the students indicated that they never worked more than the required 15 hours per week. Fifteen percent of the students indicated that they sometimes worked overtime and 19% indicated that they often worked overtime.

Sex by Grade

An analysis of sex by grade showed that even though the number of male and female students was about equal in the 9th and 10th grades, by the 11th and 12th grades the number of female students in the Jobs Program outnumbered male students (see Table 3).

Insert Table 3 about here

The trend was such that female students outnumbered male students in a ratio of 3:1 in the 11th grade and 5:2 in the 12th grade. Explanations for this finding could be: (1) that there are fewer males than females in the high schools in our sample, (2) that male students, as compared to female students, did not meet minimum requirements for the Jobs Program; and (3) fewer male students chose to participate in the program. In any case, these statistics suggest that male students are at-risk for dropping out of high school.

Age for Grade Level

As can be seen in Table 4, the majority of students (62%) were at grade level for age, $X^2(15, \underline{N}=73) = 51.62$, $\underline{p} < .001$.

Insert Table 4 about here

Of the remaining 27 students, results indicated that 20 (27% of the original sample) were one year over age for grade, four were two years over age for grade, and three were three or four years over age for grade. Thus, most students were either at their grade level for age or one year below their grade level for age.

School and Program Support of Students in the DPI Jobs Program

Students were asked both about courses that had prepared them for their jobs and about job counseling. Fifty-two percent of the students indicated that they had courses in school which prepared them for their jobs; these included word processing, typing, computer training, math and record/bookkeeping. Male and female students were equally likely to indicate that computers, math and record/bookkeeping were courses that had prepared them for their job, but this was not true of typing and word processing. The trend was such that a greater proportion of the female students than of male students indicated that they had had word processing or typing courses which had prepared them for their job.

Only 14% of the students indicated that they had received tutoring or other special academic supports. A little over half of the students indicated that they had received job counseling. School staff cited most often by the students as providing job-related counseling were the Jobs Coordinator and the school Guidance Counselor. Teachers and the Job Developer also provided counseling.

Student Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction With Their Jobs

Students on the whole (83%) were satisfied with their jobs. The most common reasons students gave for their satisfaction were: (1) they liked the site, (2) felt challenged (e.g., gained experience, learned about procedures, had interesting work to do, were kept busy), (3) liked the people that they worked with or for, and (4) liked the salary (see Table 5a).

Insert Table 5a about here

Eighty-four percent of the students also indicated that they were learning skills on their job that would be useful in the future. Students said that they were gaining experience and responsibility, were learning new things, were working in the area of their future career, and were learning to work with both children and adults.

As can be seen in Table 5b, though the majority of students were satisfied with their jobs, students dissatisfaction was greater when they had "things" jobs.

Insert Table 5b about here

The major reason students gave for dissatisfaction with their jobs was that their job was not challenging enough. Forty-six percent of responses given by students for their dissatisfaction with their job fell into this category. Other reasons given for dissatisfaction included inadequate salary, the supervisor's poor relationship with workers, the work seemed like "job slavery" and the combination of employment and academic studies created fatigue and a long school day.

Students' Sex by How Money Is Being Used

Students indicated that they were working to meet their needs and the needs of their family. Fifty percent of the students stated that they were working to meet both their needs and the needs of their family. Forty-seven percent said that they were working to meet just their own needs. Male students, as compared to female students, were more likely to be working to meet both their needs and the needs of their family; $X^2(2, \underline{N}=70) = 5.25$, $\underline{p} < .10$ (see Table 6).

Insert Table 6 about here

Students' Relationship with Boss and Co-Workers

Students were asked about their relationship with supervisors and co-workers. Over three-quarters of the students said that they got along well or very well with their boss; the mean = 4.38 on a five-point Likert scale where 1 = "poor" and 5 = "very well." Similarly, the majority (81%) of students stated that they got along well or very well with their co-workers; the mean = 4.51 on a five-point Likert scale where 1 = "poor" and 5 = "very well" (see Tables 7 and 8).

Insert Tables 7 and 8 about here

Boss Views Work

When asked how their boss viewed their work, 61% of the students indicated that their boss maintained a good to excellent view of their work. Twenty percent said that their boss felt that their work was okay and 6% or four of the seventy-seven students indicated that their boss had a poor view of their work (see Table 9).

Insert Table 9 about here

It is interesting to note that 14% of the students said that they didn't know how their boss viewed their work. These last results suggest that some students may require more feedback from their employer in regards to work performance.

Effect of Having a Job

Fifty-four percent of the students indicated that because they had a job, they would want to work harder in school. Forty-two percent said that they would want to work about the same. Only three students indicated that they would want to work less. Thus, in the students' eyes, having a job either had a positive impact or no impact on their academic motivation. For this sample, then, having a job did not detract from students' motivation to work in school.

When the evaluation examined outcomes for all students in the evaluation sample, it was found that Jobs program students passed just 54% of their courses in 1987-88 (Chapter Four, Table 4-25). The survey sample included only students who were still in school in Spring 1988, and thus is biased toward more successful students. Survey respondents passed an average of 75% of their courses in the spring term. Even so, 25% of the respondents passed less than 60% of their courses in the spring. This indicates the need for stronger academic supports for students than were reported by the respondents or were found for students in the program generally.

Effect of No Jobs Program

When asked what they would have done if there had not been a Jobs Program, over half of the students (57%) indicated that they would have attended school about the same amount. Further analysis showed that males were more likely to say that they would have attended school less if there had not been a Jobs Program; $X^2(2, N=75) = 10.72$, $p < .001$ (see Table 10).[1]

Insert Table 10 about here

Conclusion

Researchers found that minority male students were particularly at-risk:

- by the 11th and 12th grades, the number of male students was substantially less than the number of female students participating in the Jobs Program;
- male students were more likely to say that they were working to meet both their needs and the needs of their family;
- male students indicated that they would have attended school less if there had not been a Jobs Program.

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[1] Data on attendance and achievement for students in the D.P.I. Program are forthcoming from the N.Y.C. Board of Education and will be included in future analyses.

This lends support to the idea that male students may drop out of school when the need to support their families competes with their academic studies. As discussed earlier in this paper, this may be particularly true for males who are not succeeding in school. A nation-wide longitudinal study of dropouts indicated that 36% of the students surveyed gave work or family-related issues as their primary reasons for leaving school. Minority males may continue to leave school unless this problem is addressed. Finding viable solutions to this problem is especially important given that the minority population in the United States is steadily increasing, lack of schooling limits job options in the long-run, and that restricted job options have a severe impact on the individual, his family and society as a whole. Future research should continue to monitor sex differences as they relate to dropout behavior. Research should particularly focus on the disproportionate dropout rate among hispanic male students.

Female students were more likely than male students to identify typing or word processing courses taken in school as preparing them for their jobs. This may indicate the need to look more closely at the way male and female students either choose or are placed into courses that may determine future career options. The fact that women continue to earn less on the dollar than men makes this issue a serious concern. Sex-role stereotyping, as it relates to employment, is an area which still needs to be addressed.

Students in this sample were acutely affected by their work environment. These high school youth seemed eager to work in job settings that were not designed to be too easy, that did not compete with their school work, that paid more than the minimum wage, and that provided them with constructive feedback about their job-related skills. Further support for the inference that jobs need to be more challenging for youth is that the majority (62%) of students indicated that their current job would not be a future career.

About half the students indicated that they had not received job counseling at school. In order for a jobs program to be really effective, a relationship should exist between employers and the schools. Skills taught in school should enhance the students' school achievement, job performance, and his/her ability to enter the labor market after graduation. On the other hand, skills learned in appropriate job settings illustrate to students the ties that exist between education and work.

Programs similar to that of the DPI Jobs Program, but with increased challenge and supports, should be expanded. Students earned needed funds, learned skills that would be an asset in the future, and interacted successfully with co-workers and supervisors, but they expressed a need for more challenging jobs. Students indicated that their jobs either enhanced or at least did not detract from their academic studies. However, while this seemed to be true for the majority of participants, a fourth of the students surveyed were passing less than 60% of their courses in the spring term. Students with part-time jobs should be provided with strong academic and counseling supports.

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Table 1

Racial Composition of Students

Race	Frequency	Percent
Hispanic	34	45.3
Non-hispanic black	20	26.7
Hispanic black	9	12.0
Caucasian	5	6.7
Other	5	6.7
Hispanic white	2	2.7
TOTAL	75[a]	100.0

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[a] Two students did not indicate their race.

Table 2

Contingency Table of Students' Sex by Type of Job

	Type of Job[a]				
Sex	People	Data	Things	Totals	(%)
Male	3	14	5	22	(32.4)
Female	12	28	6	46	(67.6)
Totals	15	42	11	68	
(%)	(22.1)	(61.8)	(16.2)		

[a] People jobs included working as a teaching assistant, tutor, admitting patients or serving as an advocate. Data jobs included clerical work and working with computers. Things jobs included cashiers, maintenance personnel, messengers, short order cooks, stock boys, and animal caretakers.

Table 4

Age for Grade Level

	Grade					
Level[a]	9	10	11	12	Totals	%
At Grade Level	3	5	15	23	46	(63.0)
1 year above age for grade	2	11	3	4	20	(27.4)
2 years above age for grade	0	2	1	1	4	(5.5)
3 years above age for grade	0	2	0	0	2	(2.7)
4 years above age for grade	0	1	0	0	1	(1.4)
Totals	5	21	19	28	73	
%	(6.8)	(28.8)	(26.0)	(38.3)		

[a] Calculations are based on considering 14 and 15 as the appropriate age for 9th grade, 15 and 16 years for 10th grade, 16 and 17 years for 11th grade, and 17 and 18 years for the 12th grade.

Note: For the contingency table of age by grade $X^2(15, \underline{N} = 73) = 51.62$, $\underline{p} < .001$.

Table 5a

Student Satisfaction with Job

	Reasons Given for Satisfaction					
Type of Job[a]	Challenging Job	Liked Supervisors, Coworkers and/or Clients	Salary	Liked Job Site	Total[b] N	(% Expressing Satisfaction)[c]
People	2	4	1	6	14	(92.8)
Data	13	10	0	12	40	(87.5)
Things	1	0	1	2	9	(44.4)
Totals[d]	16	14	2	20	63	
(%)[e]	(30.8)	(26.9)	(3.8)	(38.5)		

[a] People jobs included working as a teaching assistant, tutor, admitting patients or serving as an advocate. Data jobs included clerical work and working with computers. Things jobs included cashiers, maintenance personnel, messengers, short order cooks, stock boys, and animal caretakers.

[b] These totals are based on the 63 responses of the students who stated their reasons for satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their jobs.

[c] Percentages for each job category are based on the number of responses from students who expressed satisfaction with their job for that particular job category.

[d] These totals are based on the 52 responses of the students who expressed satisfaction with their job.

[e] These percentages are based on the 52 responses of the students who expressed satisfaction with their job.

Table 5b

Student Dissatisfaction with Job

	Reasons Given for Dissatisfaction							
Type of Job[a]	Job Lacked Challenge	Long work/ school day	Workers dislike supervisor	Insufficient salary	Dislike job location	Dislike job/ slavery	Total[b] N	(% Expressing Dissatisfaction)[c]
People	1	0	0	0	0	0	14	(7.1)
Data	3	1	1	0	0	0	40	(12.5)
Things	1	0	0	2	1	1	9	(55.6)
Totals[d]	5	1	1	2	1	1	63	
(%)[e]	(45.5)	(9.1)	(9.1)	(18.2)	(9.1)	(9.1)		

[a] People jobs included working as a teaching assistant, tutor, admitting patients or serving as an advocate. Data jobs included clerical work and working with computers. Things jobs included cashiers, maintenance personnel, messengers, short order cooks, stock boys, and animal caretakers.

[b] These totals are based on the 63 responses of the students who stated their reasons for satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their jobs.

[c] Percentages for each job category are based on the number of responses from students who expressed dissatisfaction with their jobs for that particular job category.

[d] These totals are based on the 11 responses of the students who expressed dissatisfaction with their job.

[e] These percentages are based on the 11 responses of the students who expressed dissatisfaction with their job.

Table 6

Contingency Table of Sex by How Students Are Using Their Earnings

	How Students Are Using Their Earnings			
Sex	To meet own needs	To meet family's needs	To meet own needs and family's needs	Totals (%)
Male	9	2	15	26 (37.1)
Female	24	0	20	44 (62.9)
Totals	33	2	35	70
(%)	(47.1)	(2.9)	(50.0)	

Note: $X^2(2, \underline{N} = 70) = 5.25, \underline{p} < .10$

Table 7

Students' Perceptions of Their Relationship with Their Supervisor

Description of Relationship	Frequency	Percent
Poor	1	1.3
Fair	4	5.2
Okay	6	7.8
Well	20	26.0
Very well	46	59.7
TOTAL	77	100.0

Table 8

Students' Perceptions of Their Relationship with Their Coworkers

Description of Relationship	Frequency	Percent
Poor	2	2.6
Fair	0	0
Okay	5	6.5
Well	20	26.0
Very well	50	64.9
TOTAL	77	100.0

Table 9

Students' Perceptions of How Their Supervisor Views Their Work

Supervisor's View of Work	Frequency	Percent
Poor	4	5.6
Fair	0	0
Okay	14	19.7
Well/Good	21	29.6
Very well	22	31.0
Don't know	10	14.1
TOTAL	71[a]	100.0

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[a] 6 students did not answer this question.

Table 10

Contingency Table of Sex by Impact on School Attendance

If There Had Not Been a Jobs Program

	Effect on School Attendance				
Sex	Attend School More	Attend School the Same	Attend School Less	Totals	(%)
Male	7	11	8	26	(34.7)
Female	15	32	2	49	(65.3)
Totals	22	43	10	75	
	(29.3)	(57.3)	(13.3)		

Note: $X^2(2, \underline{N} = 75) = 10.72, \underline{p} < .001$

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Case Studies of the DPP Teams in Two High Schools

Susan Sullivan

Summary

This study, derived from case reports based on a year of fieldwork, compares the development of the New York City Dropout Prevention Program (DPP) in two high schools. Particular attention is paid to one of the DPP's primary goals, the creation of school-based management teams.

The New York City school profiles of Howard and Hamilton High Schools are similar. In addition, they both chose the "modified systemic" model of service delivery. The resemblance diminishes as Hamilton's gentrified surroundings and cheerful, clean decor are compared with Howard's poor, dangerous neighborhood and austere ambiance. The Hamilton staff has been hired over the years to teach students of a caliber similar to the students currently enrolled, while many veteran Howard faculty members began their careers with a different type of student body.

The Hamilton administrative team has not only been very actively involved in the DPP, but has fostered shared decision-making at the school as well as at the DPP level. The Howard DPP

team speaks of the principal's increasing support and cooperation, but the building administration's involvement has been limited and has not promoted DPP involvement in school site management. The results of the different administrative approaches were apparent at the end of the third year of the program.

Hamilton's DPP team is growing in numbers and strength. The DPP is being integrated with the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP), is being invited to administrative cabinet meetings, and as programs such as the PM School (ninth period) are receiving grants and being incorporated into the building program, the DPP is expanding its efforts to involve more teachers through activities such as staff development. The growth of the innovative mini-school and in the family assistant's role illustrate the team's vitality. The weak spot has been the eventual rejection of all but one of the original four community-based organizations (CBOs) participating in the program.

In contrast, the CBOs at Howard have slowly become integrated into the school and have become one of the DPP's greatest strengths. Nonetheless, the lack of administrative facilitation of CBO and DPP initiatives has taken its toll. Instead of planning expansion, an innovative CBO director and the DPP coordinator talk of honing already existing programs, and the team is struggling to keep some components alive.

The study of these two schools illustrates the importance of examining the process of implementation of programs in individual contexts and the role of an active, interactive experimental environment that strong, facilitative leadership fosters in developing the alternative structures and programs necessary to reach at-risk students.

The creation of school-based management teams was one of the primary goals of the Dropout Prevention Program (DPP). In addition to some autonomy in the development of mandated components in the ten DPP high schools, the teams could also choose from a whole panoply of tried and untried dropout prevention ideas and programs to fit the rest of their individual programs to the school. This school-based approach is best evaluated by case studies that can trace and follow the development of these individualized programs. My fieldwork comprised predominately the study of two superficially similar schools that chose the "modified systemic" model of service delivery i.e., the provision of some case-management services for targeted students by community-based organizations with the bulk of services directed toward the school as a whole. This study will concentrate on one of the two high schools. The second high school will serve primarily as a basis of comparison for the development of the DPP in different settings and will help elucidate the underlying reasons for the course the program has taken in each institution.

Hamilton and Howard High Schools, zoned or neighborhood schools, both have circa 3000 students with student bodies of somewhat comparable ethnic, socio-economic and academic backgrounds, that is, majority Hispanic, Black, and other non-white, low-income, and limited educational attainment. During the 1984-85 academic year, the period preceding the first full year of the implementation of the Dropout Prevention Initiative, Howard's dropout rate was 19.3 percent, the annual school attendance rate was 69.9 percent, 240 students were suspended, 15.4 percent had limited English proficiency, and 50.1 percent did not speak English at home. At Hamilton the official dropout rate was 13.4 percent (but 18.2 and 24 percent the two previous years), the attendance rate was 70.6 percent, 170 students were suspended, 11.1 percent had limited English proficiency, and 53.7 percent spoke a language other than English at home.

My personal observations cover approximately one out of the first three-and-one-half years of the Dropout Prevention Program, from November, 1987 to January, 1989 at Howard High School, and from February, 1988 to January, 1989 at Hamilton High School. The case study of Hamilton High School will be organized around major team members in its DPP and the components with which they have been involved as well as a section on the school principal and administration, and the recent school history that has played an important role in the evolution of the DPP. A much briefer synopsis of the same features of the Howard High School DPP will inform the comparison of the two schools. All names of school personnel, institutions, and organizations other than the DPP and district-wide test names have been changed.

Hamilton High School

> The mission of the Dropout Prevention Team at Hamilton High School is to help create an exemplary neighborhood high school by fostering a safe and challenging learning environment to meet the diverse academic and social needs of our student population.
>
> DPP Mission Statement

The first impression of the new visitor to Hamilton High School who arrives via the subway is to check to see if he or she got off at the right stop. The subway exit is on a gentrified commercial thoroughfare. Gourmet delis and green grocers, cafes and chic restaurants dominate the streetscape. Across from the main entrance of the school are similar shops. Elegant renovated townhouses border two sides of this massive, old, nondescript building; a hospital is on the fourth side. Only the few stray students approaching the building or waiting at the door hint at a student body that may not be representative of the middle and upper-middle class predominately white residents of the immediate neighborhood. The partial and ongoing gentrification of the zone and the lack of "hanging out" around the building during school hours comprise the first images of Hamilton. As soon as the visitor penetrates the main entrance three more ingredients are revealed: clean, light blue walls with little or no graffiti in sight; several bright, filled bulletin boards and display cases one of which touts the Dropout Prevention Program and introduces its staff with accompanying pictures, extending an invitation to join the DPP and announcing an attendance award; and Mama-the caring, intelligent, articulate bilingual security guard. She has been at the door for years, is invited on student trips, delays my entry to take care of a crying student, and knows my name on my third visit.

The principal's and his secretary's office are also painted a bright, light blue and the walls are adorned with posters and mottos oriented towards the students' edification and enjoyment. For example, "The potential for greatness is in your hands" accompanies a picture of hands playing the piano; a horse jumping over hurdles is explained as "The greater the obstacle, the more triumph in overcoming it." I first met the principal in the DPP office. There is constant contact between the DPP and the principal's office, both between secretaries and professional staff; what strikes the observer is the feeling of equality in the exchanges and the difficulty in discerning rank in the casual friendly conversations. During subsequent visits, Mr. Zirkes willingly recounted the story of his tenure at Hamilton High which began a little over one year before the inception of the DPP at the school.

Hamilton was never one of the elite New York City high schools. It was called the High School of Vocational Training until 1960 although it had been a comprehensive zoned school except in title for years. The student body had been predominantly working class Irish and Italian before it became Black and Hispanic. The importance of this history lies in the fact that, according to the principal, the staff had never come to this school under the illusion that the student body was traditionally motivated or academically oriented. Changes have been in ethnicity not in academic orientation. School administrators, a CBO director, and a CBO report sent to the Board of Education concurred that the early 1970s was the beginning of a bad period in Hamilton's history. A series of principals did not receive tenure. In 1976 the city's fiscal crisis exacerbated the situation and the school's reputation as Hairy Hamilton became more and more fitting. Mr. Zirkes and the Assistant Principal (AP) for Administration recount that upon their arrival to replace a principal removed in April, 1983, the walls were filled with graffiti, gangs roamed the halls torching bulletin boards and setting fires, and the faculty did not care - chaos reigned.

Since the Assistant Principal for Administration (AP)had also been removed, Zirkes was able to bring in his choice of AP for administration. In order to round out his own leadership team, the next year the district superintendent granted the principal an extraordinary new AP position. Thus, he brought in his own AP for Guidance and gave the newly created position of AP for Security to the outgoing AP for Guidance. The district superintendent also complied with the principal's request for an immediate paint job. Constant touch-ups to maintain the graffiti-free walls and severely punished infractions resulted in at least an appearance of order. With the formation of his own leadership team to create an orderly environment, the eligibility of Hamilton to participate in the Dropout Prevention Program because of its high dropout rate gave the principal the fortuitous opportunity to build rapport with his staff and to create a school-based management team.

Mr. Zirkes had noticed a Spanish and Social Studies teacher frequently in the halls, always concerned with the students, rounding them up to participate in the marathon team that the faculty member had voluntarily formed. The principal took the initiative to suggest that the teacher apply for the DPP coordinator's position to which he was subsequently appointed. Lorenzo Rodriguez was born in Puerto Rico, brought up two miles from Hamilton from which he graduated and now lives three miles from the school. He proudly relates that his daughter will attend the high school next year. Mr. Zirkes also contacted a former Hispanic student from his previous principalship who had dropped out of Hamilton but had subsequently studied secretarial science. Juan Blanco became the DPP secretary and a member of the DPP team. Several other important paraprofessionals involved with the program and on the team are also Hispanic Hamilton graduates --the family assistant, the computer specialist, among others. The opportunity for these Hispanics to be role models and to provide a feeling of community now exists even if their employment as Hispanics may not always have been intentional.

The faculty that formed the original DPP team and have remained or become even more active, were a group of very committed teachers, some of whom live in the surrounding community - although most are not Hispanic and only a few are Black. One teacher remarked that the cultural differences between the Hispanic and non-Hispanic staff cause occasional disagreements. The DPP teachers also form the core of the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) and the academically oriented ACORN program; they are union representatives for the building and they attend PTA meetings. Further, both the APs for Administration and Guidance are team members and attend the weekly DPP meetings frequently if not regularly. The principal's participation has been increasing rather than diminishing.

The first year of the program was of necessity experimental. The principal and the team members had some differences as they worked out their roles, relationships and attitudes. By the second year, Mr. Zirkes had gained confidence in the team as the members had developed their own mutual trust. Interestingly, only one of the four community based organizations has survived, and not without conflict, as a part of the DPP team.

This academic year (1988-89) marks a turning point in the formation of a school-based management team. As the participants contemplate the possible termination of the Dropout Prevention Program as it has existed since its inception in 1985, they are planning for an uncertain future. The principal seems to have made the decision to solidify the team-based management process. The DPP central office recommendation to integrate the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) group with the DPP is being taken seriously at this school. The substantial overlap of DPP and CSIP team members and the involvement of the DPP team in so many facets of school planning facilitates the amalgamation that is already taking place. The principal has increased his attendance at the weekly DPP meetings and the other two major APs continue to attend. The most significant change being attempted is the effort to include teaching staff at cabinet meetings. Mr. Zirkes' official attempt to incorporate teaching staff into cabinet meetings met predictably with some cabinet resistance because of the perceived threat to the status quo, their turf and power. This miscalculation on the principal's part is one of the rare instances of which I am aware of Mr. Zirkes' not dealing successfully with superiors, peers, or "subordinates". He has had to take a step backward and integrate teachers more slowly into cabinet level participation. The real test of the efficacy of the DPP at Hamilton lies in the post-DPP integration into the larger school arena of the components and planning structures developed under the impetus of the DPP.

The Mini-school

Susan Marlo's original job on the DPP team was that of case manager; she was a teacher serving as a facilitator-coordinator of social services for at-risk students. When the case-management team realized how difficult it was to integrate these students into classes after the start of the academic year, they decided to develop an alternative educational component. They reasoned that managing these students' personal problems would not keep them from dropping out unless an academic program existed that could hold them in school. Therefore, they created a mini-school with small classes (around twenty students) in which the students followed a block program of English, math, social studies and life skills. The students remained together for these classes, providing a support network. In fact, Susan Marlo described the strong peer interaction and "chumminess" as a major benefit of the first year of the mini-school. This cohesion also fostered competition to achieve and do well. It was intended as a one year program with students taking other subjects and electives the second semester. A Good Samaritan (a CBO already assigned to the school) social worker provided services on a need basis. Guidance counselors, teachers, and Good Samaritan social workers recommended students (including at the junior high level) on the primary bases of absences and lateness. The program was inaugurated in February, 1987 with 25 students.

By the fall of 1988, the mini-school had grown to four classes totaling 100 youngsters. The DPP Newsletter of April 1988 described mainstreaming into the regular Hamilton schedule and placement of students in alternative schools and GED programs as indications of success. A student in a portrait in a DPP Central Office report recounts how Susan Marlo and the mini-school prevented her from dropping out. Ms. Marlo points to the fact that half of the participating students earned credits last semester who had not passed any course the previous term. Nonetheless, the road to this achievement has been quite rocky. One of the main dilemmas until this year was staffing the classes. Few teachers volunteered, so teachers were assigned or it was their last choice. Since the assignment was only a small part of their load, Susan had difficulty scheduling meetings without common planning time. The aforementioned problems did not always produce the best teaching. Student attendance continued to be a problem that they tried to work with and understand rather than eliminate entirely.

A second section was added in the fall of 1987. The team decided to develop the concept of the one-room schoolhouse. The students were to stay all day in one room complete with library and computers. One department head offered a classroom and then reclaimed it. Ms. Marlo believes that the students were so upset after their initial enthusiasm that it took a semester to remedy the damage. Meanwhile two teachers had "burned out", and another was rigid and resistant. The assistant principal in charge of hiring was not succeeding in getting the concept of the mini-school across and attracting good teachers. Thus, after the disappointments of the fall 1987 semester, the team reevaluated the program. First, they requested that a Good Samaritan social worker be assigned to the mini-school. Then they decided that the conventional set-up of rooms all over the building, teachers designated as an extra assignment, and a traditional curriculum could not work for these students. The DPP team recommended early aggressive advertising for staffing, workshops for Susan and an assistant principal, supplementary prep time, a common planning period, and teacher defined curriculum. Since few teachers chose this assignment, no one has objected to their reduced classroom time.

After more than one-and-a half years of trial and error, the 100 students in four sections of the 1988-89 mini-school can finally begin to reap the fruits of the struggle. A young, diverse, motivated, voluntary teaching staff conducts, for the most part, outstanding appropriate classes. The weekly mini-school meetings appear to be models of collaborative, creative, caring exchanges and planning about students, teachers, and curriculum with varying methods to reach the students. The choice of teaching technique often seems less important than the caring and commitment with which it is conveyed. One of the teachers even accompanied the students on a camping weekend. The social worker described this Hispanic teacher as a person who will do anything to help the kids. Susan Marlo and her staff were recently invited to the cabinet to explain the mini-school and share their experiences and impressions - another first.

The Family Assistant

Attendance outreach is one of the mandated components of the DPP. The Hamilton Dropout Prevention Program pays the salary of six Family Assistants. Several work in the Guidance Office and another is employed in Special Education. One Family Assistant who was the first to make home visits, works out of the DPP office as does the school Attendance Officer. Consequently, these two individuals coordinate their home visits and travel together.

Jesus, the DPP office Family Assistant and another Hamilton graduate, enthusiastically explained his responsibilities. He visits the homes of students with two failures and 20 or more absences or long-term absentees (LTAs) who he believes are forced into situations they cannot help because of the need to work or an ill family member. He brings GED information to the students, does counseling and recruits jobs in the neighborhood stores. He persistently returns to some homes and even makes some evening home visits. When asked about the contrast between what he actually does and the official Family Assistant job description which limits the Family Assistant's interaction with the home to inquiries about the absences and referrals, he replied that he has a lot of support for the way he carries out his position. He also remarked on the importance of the DPP computer expert (another Hispanic and Hamilton graduate) who has created forms that facilitate his visits. He feels that his being Hispanic and a Hamilton graduate allow him to go into more depth about personal information and obtain better responses and make him a role model.

After three years with the DPP, Jesus left the program and the school at the end of the summer. At a recent DPP meeting a discussion took place on the lack of replacement for Jesus and the difficulty of finding a good job recruiter. With the support of the team and the administration and a personal commitment, he had taken a "job" and built a "position" that team members say will not be easy to fill.

Co-curricular Activities

The development of the before and after-school program under the auspices of the DPP is revelatory with respect to the workings of the Hamilton DPP and the New York City schools. When asked about co-curricular activities, the DPP coordinator exuberantly described the upcoming "chef-maker" club that a DPP team member will sponsor as an after-school club. The club will make chocolate, and their dream is to open a cafe for the students to give them entrepreneurial experience instead of working as automatons at Burger King. This idea joins the positive attitude and idealism of Lorenzo Rodriguez that he continually transmits to the students and the team belief that the at-risk population needs non-traditional alternative programs to hold it in school. Mr. Walden, the coordinator of before and after-school activities exemplifies the latter belief.

Mr. Walden explained that before the institution of the DPP, only three clubs remained at Hamilton because lack of funding during the 1970s financial crunch had eliminated all but wrestling, boosters, and the Fashion Club. By the fall of 1987, DPP sponsored clubs ranged from an SAT Computer Prep/RCT Writing Computer Class at 7:05 A.M., to chorus and a Diet Club. The biggest impediment for Mr. Walden has been the inability to schedule co-curricular activities during the school day for youngsters who leave early or cannot make it before or after school - a common occurence especially among at-risk students. Teachers cannot get paid for conducting school clubs during their prep or lunch periods, although they are compensated for covering classes. Walden has asked the Assistant Superintendent for Dropout Prevention and the Board of Education president among others for flexibility on this ruling - but to no avail. He wonders if he will he get positive results from the new chancellor.

The ongoing reexamination and development of the Hamilton DPP team pointed the after-school activities in a new direction for 1988-89 that may alleviate although not solve the after-school scheduling problem. The DPP team set up and put aside moneys for a P.M. School (classes held during a ninth and/or tenth periods bearing credit for successful completion) for the fall 1988 term. The orientation of the team towards improving and developing alternative academic structures led them to offer credit for clubs through the PM School wherever possible. Simultaneously, they successfully applied for state funding for the PM School to permit them to create more programs. The team decided to use the surplus funds for the following staff development activities. The members want the DPP to reach all teachers and to play a greater role in enhancing instruction. Therefore, they offered $250 mini-grants for innovative classroom proposals. When someone mentioned at a DPP meeting that a similar project at the district level had not met with much success, the coordinator responded that that does not mean that the team cannot try, and try "more and better". Eight grants have been awarded thus far. A second prong to this new effort, which has gotten off to a slower start, is reimbursement for approved workshops and courses.

Thus, a strong before and after-school program the DPP developed expanded with a PM School. Students now have the opportunity to earn credits after the regular school day, which through the team's acquisition of state funding has become a school-run program further permitting the team to increase its school-wide efforts in staff development.

Community-Based Organizations

During the course of the first three years of the DPP, the team contracted with four community-based organizations (hereafter referred to as CBOs) for services. By the beginning of the fourth year (fall 1988) only one remained at Hamilton and a summer crisis had threatened its survival. What were these organizations and why were their contracts cancelled?

The first CBO to bite the dust was the Conflict Management and Mediation Program (CMMP) slated to increase staff and student awareness of and skills in handling conflicts within the school environment. Team members and administrators proffered many explanations for its demise that only a few seem to regret. The most consistant reason given was the AP for Security's resistance. The former AP for Guidance (until Mr. Zirkes reorganized the administration), exerted what remained of his power to sabotage this new threat to his turf - and succeeded. Deans also resisted the "threat", teachers cancelled workshops and complained about pull-outs. The interest some newer teachers showed was not sufficient to turn the tide. The second year saw a mutual parting of ways.

The two other departed CBOs offered academic enrichment, a major thrust of the Hamilton DPP. The principal had seen an EMMY award-winning production by Teen Theater Rehabilitation (TTR) whose director he knew. They made contact and brought TTR to Hamilton. The first year, as part of the after-school program TTR presented a review students wrote based on the reasons adolescents drop out. The second year the director requested that TTR be scheduled during the school day. He felt that he had difficulty attracting participants after school because so many left the premises after lunch - the problem the after-school coordinator had tried in vain to solve. Unfortunately, he complained the second year that his students were failing their courses which made pulling them out of class for rehearsals problematic, and he feared the play would not get off the ground at all. I observed a rehearsal on an early dismissal day. No one had informed the director of the scheduling changes and the heat had not been turned on in the auditorium because of the 11:00 A.M. dismissal time. The students were rehearsing in their coats and the custodian refused to let them stay after 11:00 despite the ideal opportunity to practice all day unhindered by classes. The coordinator who was present was sympathetic, but offered no solution. This was the second blatant example of the custodians' bureaucratic inflexibility that had interfered with Hamilton DPP programs. TTR was not asked to come back for the 1988-89 academic year. Mr. Rodriguez explained that the decision was due to scheduling problems. Other team members offered other reasons and again did not give the impression that the demise of this CBO was a great loss, if one at all.

Stir and Star Productions brings poets and video technicians into the classroom to create poetry video projects. The longterm goal is to teach faculty members the methodology and technology so that they can carry out their own projects. After three years of participation, the team did not renew a contract for the fourth year. One team member summarized: they did not deliver what they promised. Equipment we bought did not appear for the supposed hands-on training of the teachers who of course were dissatisfied. We are still trying to retrieve some of the equipment for which they paid. The only positive comment was about some of the poets brought in to teach.

Good Samaritan Services, a social services agency whose main office is a few blocks from Hamilton, operates community-based services for youth and adults. The agency has had an interest in and commitment to Hamilton and three of their feeder schools for fifteen years; a teen parent project has an office in the school, the agency co-teaches a Community Affairs class at the high school and places students in volunteer community efforts and runs an alternative high school in which Hamilton long-term absentees participate. In 1984, the agency's concern for Hamilton prompted it to form a committee that wrote "A Blueprint for Hamilton High School", urging new leadership. Mr. Zirkes was hired soon after. Good Samaritan was, therefore, the natural choice to provide additional dropout prevention counseling.

One counselor joined the DPP program in February, 1986. A second social worker was deemed necessary as the mini-school grew. The high level of interaction and communication that has been the hallmark of the DPP team and the school administration has been lacking in the relationship between the DPP and Good Samaritan. The Good Samaritan supervisor's inconsistent presence at DPP team meetings which in part caused a lack of ongoing discussion over dissatisfaction with the original social worker precipitated a crisis in DPP-Samaritan relations this summer. A Teachers College evaluation researcher noted that the CBOs had not been invited to Hamilton DPP team meetings until 1987. The problem was resolved with the resignation of the original social worker, the successful effort to procure a bilingual replacement.

and the agreement to improve communications. The increase in the supervisor's attendance at DPP related meetings is apparent to even the occasional observer. The mini-school counselor has had a highly successful relationship with students and teachers from the outset.

A reported perception of arrogance on the DPP team and their need to change their image to win over the rest of the staff this year in order to have a truly school-wide effect, is the only stated clue to the difficulties the DPP team has had with the CBOs. In addition, each CBO history in the school has been as different as the component itself. No one, however, seems to bemoan the departure of the other CBOs. Furthermore, the constant contact and activity among the school DPP members renders the integration of parttime outsiders difficult. The Good Samaritan mini-school and dropout counselors work fulltime with the program and have the potential to become an integral part of the team. In sum, relations between the DPP and Good Samaritan appear to be on the mend while those with the Conflict Mediation and Management Program never had the opportunity to develop. The two smaller academic components were judged unsatisfactory although their success may not have been facilitated. The DPP team may not be taking advantage of the potential contribution of community-based organizations to their efforts to transform Hamilton High School.

* * * * *

> When I went to Hamilton, I was put in touch with Mr. Rodriguez....He had a personal interest in keeping up with my school work and with how I was doing. He made me feel special and that I could belong in school....I went back to school for myself, but he made me feel like I was doing him a favor by coming back and graduating....and he kept showing me that there were different ways for me to succeed.
>
> Hamilton Senior

The first ingredient in the success of the Hamilton DPP is caring, committed, positive-thinking adults. The second is their active interaction - interaction with the students, with each other and with the administration. The final ingredient without which the other two cannot flourish is empowering, facilitative leadership. Contrary to administrators' fears, only a strong, respected leader can have the luxury to permit and encourage a staff to interact creatively. Finally, it is the principal's ability to interact with his superiors, peers, and staff that allows him and consequently the DPP team the flexibility that the school needs to face almost overwhelming odds.

Howard and Hamilton High Schools:
A Comparison of Two DPP Efforts

In contrast with the Hamilton team's steady growth, the Howard DPP team got off to a faltering start, gained momentum during the third year, but began losing it at the close of the third year.

The different environments outside and inside Howard and Hamilton High Schools affect the functioning of the two institutions. The gentrified area around Hamilton facilitates the recruitment and retention of staff with the special advantage of attracting those who live in and are committed to the neighborhood. In contrast, the Howard area is dangerous and faculty willing to teach there are hesitant to return at night. In addition, the veteran Howard faculty who came to the school with the intention of teaching a different type of student, or at least spent time with a student body quite different from the present one, are more difficult to inspire than the staff at Hamilton where the caliber of student has not changed. Upon entering Hamilton, Mama is at the door and bright blue walls with eye-catching bulletin boards highlight the DPP. The main entrance of Howard is darker and the security guards lack Mama's involvement; and apart from the official blackboard, the visitor notices only small scattered announcements.

The location of the Hamilton DPP office next to the principal's facilitates their constant interaction, whereas the separation of the Howard DPP from the principal's office by the main entrance is symbolic of their more scheduled, hierarchical exchanges. Mr. Zirkes' participation began with his recruitment of the coordinator and other DPP staff, and program recommendations. His encouragement of shared and team-based decision making has culminated in the integration of the CSIP and the DPP. The fusion of the administration with the team has resulted in its involvement in many facets of the school's operation with an increasing orientation towards academics.

At Howard High School, the DPP team has spoken of the principal's increased support and cooperation, especially after receiving tenure at the end of the first year of the program. Most of the team feels that he is open to DPP suggestions and projects, but that he is not a proactive leader. One teacher commented that his "heart is in the right place", but that he is not capable of reorganizing a school whose structure has not changed in years. Mr. Stewart's short-lived first choice of coordinator resulted in almost a year delay in getting off the ground; the second coordinator, whom team members and administrators praise, spent most of the second year getting a handle on the program. The third year saw the greatest development in the components and team cooperation. But Howard administrators are not members of the DPP team as at Hamilton; therefore, the Howard team lacks ongoing, active administrative participation. The DPP coordinator cannot imagine the integration of the CSIP with the DPP as recommended by the DPI central office. She feels that the two teams' composition and purposes are too divergent to coordinate - department chairs and administrators are on the CSIP and it is more curriculum oriented. This lack of development of shared decision-making and empowerment of the natural leaders on the team through a facilitative leader has stymied the growth of the DPP team this fourth year. A series of small mishaps, mostly coincidental, also shook the program's fragile structure. The result is team members that talk about "cultivating their little gardens", which in contemporary terminology is "honing" what you have.

The continual reevaluation of components led the Hamilton DPP from an extracurricular club orientation to a PM school whose successfully negotiated state funding has permitted the team to finance staff development while remaining involved with the PM school. At Howard, the absorption of innovative classes into the regular schedule and the excessing of teachers involved in the P.M. school have nearly depleted the ninth period program. The loss of momentum this fourth year of the Howard DPP has also prevented it from rebuilding the P.M. program.

The team and administrative support given to the Hamilton family assistant to expand and develop his role to permit him to reach the students is also contrasted with the Howard family assistants who still feel subjected to role constraints emanating from the job description and the lack of administrative confidence in them. Hamilton's rejection of all but one CBO has complex causes that do not nevertheless erase the loss of at least one potentially helpful CBO. By contrast, patience and efforts on both sides underlie the successful integration of the Howard CBOs into the school structure. Nevertheless, the administration has not taken full advantage of the creativity and leadership potential of at least one CBO director. Both Howard CBOs filled a gap that the school had been unable to close without, however, exploiting fully the community organizations' possibilities. Consequently, one CBO director, tired of struggling with bureaucratic red tape in his efforts to effect schoolwide change, also intends to limit himself to honing already existing components this year.

Both the Hamilton and the Howard DPP teams are built upon a core of caring, committed professionals. The similarities do not go much further. At Howard, the organizational efforts of the second coordinator have produced functioning DPP components that the small, faithful regulars oversee. The poor (literally and figuratively) location and condition of the school, the very disadvantaged school population, and staffing problems render change difficult. The support and cooperation of the principal are not, however, sufficient to overcome these and other hurdles. As a result, the Howard DPP is not making schoolwide inroads and appears to have ceased expanding. In contrast, the fourth year at Hamilton seems crucial to the DPP's expansion. The team has grown in numbers, innovative programs, and influence. The principal administrators are deeply involved with the DPP and are participating in creating a school-based management team that includes teachers in shared decisionmaking. Only time will reveal the success of this delicate process.

A strong leader who facilitates the emergence of alternative structures and programs and cuts through bureaucratic red tape to allow their speedy realization is necessary to foster the constant activity and interaction at all levels that can bring substantive change. In addition, shared decisionmaking and the empowerment of the natural leaders on the team are essential to the freedom to experiment that can allow a path to be found through the labyrinth of obstacles.

Finally, the New York City DPP is aware of all of the existing dropout prevention ideas and programs. As these two schools have shown, a list of valid components in a vacuum is worthless. It is the process of their implementation and constant reevaluation in a highly active and interactive experimental environment in which strong, facilitative leadership fosters the shared decision-making of a committed group in the development of alternative structures and programs that may be the last, best hope to reach these disadvantaged youngsters.